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WITHOUT FEAR or FAVOR

OR

by Neil MacNeil

Here, for the first time, is the complete and absorbing picture of the modern American newspaper, by the man who puts *The New York Times* to press five nights a week.

This book shows how the political, industrial, agricultural, scientific, and intellectual life of the nation depends on quick and accurate information and how newspapers try to furnish it. It tells in non-technical language how the modern metropolitan newspaper is produced, with emphasis on the human problems involved. It reveals how the news is gathered in all parts of the world by competent, aggressive, intelligent reporters and correspondents, transmitted to the news rooms, edited, and the finished newspaper sent to press—all in a matter of four or five hours. It explains how the man attending a fight in Madison Square Garden is able to read an account of that fight in his favorite newspaper by the time he leaves the Garden and walks a few blocks to Times Square.

It analyzes the difficulties of obtain-

WITHOUT FEAR or FAVOR

by Neil MacNeil

(Continued from front flap)

ing complete objectivity in the news, no matter how well-intentioned, competent, and courageous the news editors are. It discusses the problems raised by the dictators and their censors and propagandists, and the special problems raised by Hitler's war. It reports how lobbyists and press agents work and how editors handle them. It outlines the work of the news specialists and takes up the tasks of the managing editor, the city editor, the foreign editor, the Washington correspondents, the critics, the sports editor, and the financial editor. It deals with the editorial writers, the press photographers, the news services, the feature syndicates. It goes into the Freedom of the Press and how this constitutional guarantee works, and takes up ethical problems and professional standards. It discusses education in journalism.

Neil MacNeil has served as assistant telegraph editor, head of the city copy desk, foreign editor, and night city editor. For the past ten years he has been assistant managing editor of *The New York Times*.

WITHOUT FEAR
OR FAVOR

Neil MacNeil

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To Elizabeth

*"To give the news impartially, without fear or favor,
regardless of any party, sect, or interest involved."*

—from Adolph S. Ochs's introductory editorial on assuming direction of *The New York Times*, August 19, 1896.

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WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR

I. Without Fear or Favor

A FREE and courageous press is part of the heritage of every American. It is a heritage that is almost as old as the Republic itself, but like many other fundamental institutions it is accepted by the American as part of his tradition of freedom, and he only becomes conscious of it when it is attacked. When he does stop to think about it he quickly realizes that it is an equal partner in democratic government. Without complete and accurate information on the activities of his government, on the state of the nation, and on the outside world he cannot offer intelligent criticism or poll an intelligent vote.

When the fight for the ratification of the Constitution was being waged up and down the thirteen colonies, the most telling argument against it was the fact that it did not contain a Bill of Rights, a clear definition of the rights and privileges of American citizens. No sooner had the new little government begun to function than the Fathers of the Country moved to remedy this defect. Two years and nine months later, the first ten amendments to the Constitution, embracing a complete Bill of Rights, had been ratified. The first amendment included freedom of the press, along with freedom of speech, the right to peaceable assembly, and the right to petition for redress of grievances. The amendments were declared in force on December 15, 1791.

Starting their modest experiment in democracy in a world still ruled by autocrats, the Founders of the Republic knew full well that the success of their government depended on an intel-

ligent electorate at a time when education was difficult and scarce and information was slow and frequently inaccurate. They had proof that American citizens would fight for their rights and protect them once they knew their interests, but first they had to be kept informed. This duty they turned over to the newspapers of the young nation, making them in fact, if not in name, copartners with the legislative, the executive, and the judicial divisions of government in the new scheme of things.

Writing in 1787 Thomas Jefferson said:

The way to prevent irregular interpositions of the people is to give them full information of their affairs through the channel of the public papers, and to contrive that those papers should penetrate the whole mass of the people. The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter.

Jefferson later, in his second inaugural address in 1805, found occasion to complain of "falsehood and defamation" by an abusive press. George Washington before him, in 1792, had expressed indignation at the "malignancy" of the attacks on his government in "some of the gazettes." Yet neither of these statesmen moved to abridge the freedom of the press that made them, themselves, the victims of vicious attacks. Smaller men in subsequent governments have tried to circumvent a free press by control of the flow of information to it, but none to date has dared openly to lay rude hands on Article I of the Bill of Rights, so strongly are a free press and free speech intrenched in American tradition.

The American press has not taken this responsibility lightly. There have been abuses of this freedom, there will be more; but most of them can be charged to overzealousness and to extreme partisanship. On the whole, from the beginning of the Republic, the editors of the American newspapers have striven

to give accurate and adequate information on the federal, state, and municipal governments. They have been watchful for any usurpation of unauthorized power; they have been alert for evidence of graft or incompetence; and they have tried to keep the governments of the country informed on the opinion of the people. They have served as the link between the government and the people.

Sad, indeed, is the newspaper and its editors who have not felt this sense of public responsibility. Newspapers must make money to live. It takes revenue, a lot of it these days, to operate a newspaper, but few newspapers work solely for dollars and cents. The satisfaction of good service to the community often comes first. The publishers and the editors feel that they are conducting an institution vital to the welfare of their community and nation; and they measure their success by the extent to which they discharge this obligation rather than by the auditor's report. There are exceptions, probably many of them, but few of them have the respect of their communities, and certainly little self-respect.

Even if there were no governments there would still be newspapers, in a community somewhat like that envisioned by Jefferson. All men from the beginning of time have felt the need for news in some form, and no tribe of men has ever been so lowly as not to have some means of conveying or disseminating information. Newspapers serve a human need. A man's curiosity about his neighbor and the world about him must be fed just as his stomach must be fed, and often a sweet morsel of news may be more satisfying than a tasty meal. Men left in the silent loneliness of the prairie often go insane. Man is a gregarious animal.

The black savages in darkest Africa send news over vast spaces of jungle by the beating of crude drums. The ancient Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians carved their stories into their monuments. Alexander in his conquest of Asia found means of sending news of his triumphs back to Greece. Caesar wrote his com-

mentaries on the Gallic wars for the citizens of Rome. The Athenian citizen strolled daily in the Agora as much to get the latest news as to hear the deliberations. The Roman did the same in the Forum.

Rome probably had the first newspaper, the *Acta Diurna*, literally "Daily Events," a compilation of short official bulletins of battles, games, elections, and religious ceremonies, which kept the citizens informed on the doings of the far-flung empire. The visitor to Pompeii today is still intrigued by inscriptions on the battered walls which in their day gave its citizens the latest news of an election campaign. In Peking under the Tang dynasty, 618-907, appeared the *Peking Gazette* with official announcements and official news. A French publication, really a newsbook, told in 1492, the year Columbus discovered America, of the surrender of Granada to his patrons, Ferdinand and Isabella. The Government of Venice issued an official newspaper, the *Notizie Scritte*, in the sixteenth century. The first real newspaper, however, with regular publication time and carrying the news of the day was the weekly *Frankfurter Journal* in Germany in 1615. This was quickly followed by the *Nieuwe Tijdinghen* in Antwerp in 1616, and the *Weekly News* in London in 1622, the latter the first newspaper in the English language.

The development of printing by Johannes Gutenberg and his contemporaries from the last half of the fifteenth century onwards made the publication of newspapers with wide circulation possible. The new industry, however, quickly came under the control of governments, and handwritten and unlicensed newsletters persisted for a time. Despite all obstacles printed newspapers continued to multiply, filling an obvious need, but most of these pioneers were a single or a folded sheet issued as a by-product of the printing shops, which depended for their major income on books and other sources. Their means of gathering news were crude, being frequently limited to matters that came under the observation of the editor-printer and his friends

and to one or more letters from observing friends abroad. Their circulation was almost as limited, being confined in most cases to a few subscribers and to copies sold to coffeehouses and other places in which men assembled, where copies were posted on the walls or handed around. When the editor did venture to publish unauthorized official information or to criticize the activities of the officials of his community he usually found himself in difficulties and his newspaper suppressed.

The beginnings of the American press were equally modest and uncertain. One of the earliest news-sheets on this side of the Atlantic was *The Present State of the New-English Affairs*, which was printed by Samuel Green in Boston in the fall of 1689. Under its heading ran the line: "This is published to prevent false reports." Its news items were based on letters from the Rev. Increase Mather, "Minister of Boston," who was in London, one to the governor and the other to his son, and told of conditions resulting from the revolt by the colonists against Governor Edmund Andros. This sheet, printed on one side only, was no more than a news broadcast. Others like it followed in the same year. Then the Governor suppressed them all as "tending to the disturbance of the peace."

The first serious attempt at a newspaper in the Colonies was made on Thursday, September 25, 1690, when *Publick Occurrences, both Forreign and Domestick*, made its appearance, also in Boston. It was a four-page sheet printed by Richard Pierce for Benjamin Harris with the announcement that it was "designed, that the Countrey will be furnished once a moneth (or if any Glut of Occurrences happen, oftener,) with an account of such considerable things as have arrived unto our notice." A leading story told how the "christianized Indians in some parts of Plimouth, have newly appointed a day of Thanksgiving to God for his Mercy in supplying their extream and pinching Necessities under their late want of Corn, & for His giving them a very Comfortable Harvest." The editor, however, failed to obtain a license and on September 29 it, too, after the one

issue, was suppressed by the Governor for "reflections of a very high order."

It was fourteen years before the next attempt at a newspaper in the Colonies. This one was the *Boston News-Letter*, which made its initial appearance on Monday, April 24, 1704, with the announcement that it was "Published by Authority." It was printed by Bartholomew Green, the half-brother of Samuel Green, who had died shortly after his venture. It developed from a handwritten newsletter that had been done by John Campbell, postmaster of Boston, and sent on occasion to the various governors of New England. After the governors had finished with these letters they had been passed from hand to hand or had been posted, further to circulate the news they contained. Their popularity made it impossible to supply the demand by hand, so the printing press was resorted to. The *Boston News-Letter* was the first newspaper in the Americas to go beyond one issue. It was published weekly, and in one form or another continued for seventy-two years. It was suppressed during the Revolution, and its publishers fled to Canada.

Campbell's success resulted in the founding of numerous newspapers in the Colonies and started a flood of news that has continued to this day. The *Boston Gazette*, issued in 1719, came next. Its publisher was William Brooker, Campbell's successor as postmaster, and it was printed by James Franklin, the elder brother of Benjamin. In 1729 Benjamin himself started the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. He also had a part in founding, on June 3, 1788, the *Montreal Gazette* which is still one of the leading newspapers in Canada.

The first daily newspaper in the United States was the *Pennsylvania Packet and American Daily Advertiser*, which appeared in Philadelphia on September 1, 1784. The first in New York was the *New York Daily Advertiser*, begun on March 1, 1785. During the Revolution more than forty newspapers appeared with more or less regularity in the thirteen colonies.

The years following the Revolution witnessed the birth of

many newspapers, some of which survive to this day, and many of which played leading rôles in the history of the new Republic. By 1810 there were sixty-six newspapers in New York State, of which fourteen were published in New York City. The New York *Evening Post* was founded by Alexander Hamilton and John Jay in 1801 as a Federalist organ. In 1826 William Cullen Bryant joined its staff, becoming the editor two years later. In 1802 the *Morning Chronicle* was started by Peter, the brother of Washington Irving. The first one-cent newspaper was the *Daily Sun* printed by Benjamin Henry Day in 1833. The New York *Herald* followed in 1835, the New York *Tribune*, established by Horace Greeley, in 1841, *The New York Times*, by Henry Raymond, in 1851, and the New York *World* in 1860.

At the beginning with hand-set type, hand-operated flat-bed presses and expensive paper, the mechanical equipment of the daily newspaper was crude, slow, and costly. Elaborate news coverage and wide circulation were impossible. But the news, itself, matched the crudeness of the plant. Information from Europe was necessarily scanty and inaccurate, and always weeks, and sometimes months, after the event. An outstanding instance of this was the fighting of the Battle of New Orleans on January 8, 1815, two weeks after the signing of the Treaty of Ghent ending the war. Domestic news was also slow. The traveler from Canada or from the frontier often brought newspapers their first inkling of events of importance, and the facts were always colored by his experiences and viewpoint.

The first great stride in American news coverage came in 1835 with the establishment of the Pony Express from Washington to New York, which cut the time between these cities to twenty hours. This enabled Philadelphia and New York newspapers to keep abreast of the activities of the federal government. The time to Boston was also reduced. Soon afterwards, newspapers cooperated in sending out news schooners to meet the

incoming Atlantic ships; this was the beginning of cooperative news-gathering organizations.

The next great development was the telegraph, annihilating space and distance and making news instantaneous. At the beginning, of course, its use was very limited. People were skeptical of sending messages over wires, and it operated at a loss. The first telegraph line was built from Washington to Baltimore in 1844. Its first news test was the reporting of the battles of the Mexican War. President Taylor's inaugural address in 1849 was the first public document carried over telegraph wires to the citizens of the nation. By the time of the Civil War the telegraph was well organized and able to give the nation almost immediate information.

Mechanical improvements in the press itself almost coincided with the growth of communications. With the old-time hand press only 240 impressions an hour were possible. Starting with 1822, when steam was first used as a motive power, came a series of press improvements and developments which culminated in 1846 in the Hoe cylinder press turning out 8,000 impressions an hour. This naturally allowed editors greater space for news and made greater circulations possible. The newspaper had definitely left the pioneer stage and was on its way.

The great era of the American press started in the early 1890s and the mechanical and intellectual progress made by newspapers in the United States since then has profoundly affected the newspapers of the world. At this time the American press took the lead and has held it ever since. Practically all important improvements in newspaper production since then have had their origin in American inventiveness.

There were three major and many minor reasons for this sudden progress. The first was the production of cheap newsprint from pulpwood. Where it had cost from eight to twenty cents a pound for newsprint of poor quality it was now possible for the publisher to purchase newsprint of far superior quality for

two or three cents a pound. The present price ranges from \$42.50 a ton to \$50. The second was the further perfection of the cylinder press, which printed, folded, and counted newspapers at a speed previously undreamed of, and permitted the size of the newspaper to be increased almost at will to meet news and advertising demands. The third was the development of type-casting machines which almost eliminated hand setting and enabled one man to do the work previously done by five. All these combined to speed up production and reduce costs.

In the years after the Civil War a newspaper with a circulation of 50,000 would be remarkable. Now one newspaper in New York sells more than 1,700,000 copies on weekdays and more than 3,000,000 on Sundays. The total circulation of daily newspapers in the United States in 1937 exceeded 41,000,000, more than one for every home in the nation, while weeklies are estimated to circulate 60,000,000, and magazines many millions more. This tremendous flood of information has inevitably had a profound effect on the thought of the nation.

Coincidental with the mechanical development of the modern newspaper came two other modern revolutions: the development on a vast scale of cheap power, both steam and electric, to replace manual labor; and the prodigious development of communications to overcome time and distance, including the railroad, the steamship, the automobile, the airplane, the telegraph, the oceanic cables, the telephone, the wireless, the radio, the motion picture, the radiophoto, and the televised image.

All these contributed to the complex life we live today and brought in their wake many problems that still await solution. First of all they stimulated the industrial revolution, changing old nations almost overnight from a static to a dynamic economy. They brought on mass production and mass distribution of goods with all the mechanical and human readjustments involved. They led millions from the farms to the great industrial centers. They broadened the life on the farm and mechanized agricultural work. They built up transcontinental traffic and

world trade of colossal proportions. They brought the nations of the world together commercially, diplomatically, and intellectually, knitting the diverse peoples of the five continents so closely that political or financial collapse in one has repercussions in many others. What is more, they made possible the quick dissemination of information over the face of the earth and in many cases made distant peoples the objectives of alien ideologies and all manner of true and false economic and political theory. They combined to make a new world.

In this new era of cheap power and fast communication the modern press functions as the third partner. It has kept abreast of, when it has not led, the onward march of progress. It has taken each one of these new developments and adapted it to its needs. It has announced and exploited each one to the full as it came along. It has kept its readers informed at every step and once they learned to dance to the new tune it has supplied the music to keep them dancing. It furnishes the medium through which mass producers make known their products to the people, and this has made mass consumption possible. It provides the information on the basis of which this complex nation is governed, its business and industries live, and its citizens move and think. It is the vital spark.

There are many kinds of newspapers, each to serve a definite purpose and each to make its appeal to a definite class. There is the great metropolitan newspaper that covers news on a world scale and interprets and displays it on a national basis, taking the world as it finds it and reporting it objectively to its readers. There is the campaigning newspaper that sets out to make the world over, exposing graft here or incompetence there, exploitation of workers here or the national resources there, trying eternally to uplift its readers and to give them a better world to live in—the newspaper with a moral purpose. There is the newspaper that is frankly for the entertainment of its readers, full of comics, pictures, and features. There is the newspaper that serves its local community, covering local news in great

detail and giving not much more than passing notice to world events. There are the organs of the major and minor political parties, which allow their enthusiasm or fanaticism to color their display of the news as well as their editorials. There are the organs of the pressure groups and the special interests that are such and nothing more.

Each newspaper makes its appeal to a special intellectual stratum in the mass of population, some to the intellectuals, others to the great middle class, and still others to the lower classes. The news and editorial contents of *The New York Times* would naturally make little appeal to and win little support from the readers of the *New York Mirror*, and the readers of the *New York Daily News* would have little patience with the intellectual fare provided daily by the *New York Herald Tribune*. Each caters to a different clientele.

Each and every newspaper thus serves a community, and the community served determines what may be called policy. The newspaper in the highly industrial center dominated by labor unions will naturally print more news of the C.I.O.-A. F. of L. fight for control than will the one in the rural district, and the latter will as naturally place more stress on the efforts in Congress and out of it to regulate crops and raise agricultural prices than will the former.

A newspaper inevitably provides the kind of information in which its readers will be interested, and although it will probably try to raise their intellectual level and improve their reasoning along the lines of their own interests, it will not stray far afield. It will make their battles and their interests its own. There is no community and no interest in these United States that has not a newspaper to serve its interests and to reflect its viewpoint.

In the aggregate the press of the United States is doing a good job in serving the nation and the people. Frequently it is closer to the sentiment of the people than is their government. Instances have been its resistance to the NRA and AAA,

whose sudden death brought few regrets, its leadership of the fight against the Roosevelt administration's efforts to change the Supreme Court, and its opposition to the official attitude toward the C.I.O. and its sit-down strikes. On occasion Congress acts on public sentiment as reflected in the press against the advice of its own leaders. Seldom is the press flouted.

The press provides the daily information which activates the nation. It keeps the legislators and the various governments informed on the wants of the people, and on world activities. It reports to the banker and the industrialist on world trends in industry and finance, on business conditions at home, on labor agitation and union demands, on distribution and consumption, as well as on the various indices on which they judge the present and predict the future—railroad carloadings, electric consumption, automobile production, clearing house turnover, and stock and bond transactions on the exchanges. It records the latest activities and triumphs of the scientists and thinkers of the world, so that other scientists and scholars as well as businessmen may adjust their affairs to the progress of the world-mind. It tells the intellectual about music, the drama, books, educational trends, archaeological discoveries, and the varied interests of his kind. For the laborer it spreads upon its pages the latest news of trends in business and in Congress, welfare and housing movements, the cost of living, union activities, and everything that may touch on the life he leads. It informs the man on the street on the follies and foibles of mankind. It sees everything; it hears everything; it reports everything.

The American press musters and educates public opinion. It leads the people in all great national efforts in peace or war. It is largely responsible for the pacifist sentiment of the nation and its altruism, while at the same time insisting on an army and navy adequate for the national defense. It calls attention to the necessity for civic improvement and sponsors many projects for the betterment of the people and the community. It supports local charities and in many instances itself raises the

necessary money to allow them to survive. It renders public service in a thousand forms. It has made the United States the most successful democracy in history.

Probably the greatest service of the American press, however, is its unceasing fight for the legal rights and liberty of the citizen. The press, of course, is not without a selfish interest in preserving our basic freedoms, for its own constitutional guarantee of freedom is inextricably bound up with them. Be that as it may, it does nevertheless maintain a constant vigilance over the dearly won rights of the people. It wants government from below, not from on high. It ferrets out and records for all to see every move, no matter how trivial, towards personal dictatorship. It stands firmly for government by law, not by men.

Any furtive doubt of the rôle of the modern newspaper in a democracy can be dispelled by observation of the haste with which avowed dictators bring it under control and make it serve their purpose. Consider the plight of the newspapers under Mussolini, Stalin, Hitler, *et al.* Dictatorships survive only so long as they have a regimented and servile press—a press that cannot tell the truth.

How vital the press is to the United States and how important a role it plays in our modern civilization may best be realized by considering for a moment what conditions would be were it suppressed even for a week. Apart from announcements on the radio, which largely depends on the newspapers for its news, we should have no detailed information on the varied activities of our federal, state, and local governments and could make our demands known only by personal petition. Uncertainty and indecision would grip all business, for it would not venture into the unknown. We should know little or nothing of what was going on in the world, with its wars, its scheming diplomats, its commercial rivalry, and its hundreds of millions of people striving to make a decent livelihood. We should be uninformed on our local community and our own neighbors.

We should lose touch with intellectual and scientific progress. We should stagnate politically, mentally, and industrially. Our complex and dynamic machinery of civilization would stand still, like a stalled automobile.

The life we lead, the work we do, and the community we inhabit in these United States are dependent on quick and accurate information provided by a press that prints the news without fear or favor. The press of a nation is a true measure of its civilization. It is also the measure of the community, and the newspaper he reads marks the culture of the individual.

II. Modern Miracle

A NEWSPAPER has a definite and individual personality, a living, throbbing thing that its staff can feel and know. Even casual visitors can sense it. It is as positive as that of a ship with its sails spread to the winds. You are as conscious of it in the city room as you are at the wheel of a racing yacht. Seated at a typewriter to write your story or at one of the news desks to edit "copy," it envelopes your personality, guides your decisions, and directs every word you send along for its columns. If you cannot feel it you should not be on the staff; you should be shining shoes or preaching from a pulpit. If you do feel it you are condemned to journalism for life. It makes *esprit de corps*. It makes great newspapers.

You can love a newspaper the way you love a dog or a horse, however strange this may seem.

Naturally, there is a wide variation in the personalities of newspapers. No two are alike, not even those in newspaper chains. One may be a prim old lady, like your favorite maiden aunt. Another may be a painted night-club lady, with a queer slant on life. Still another may be a crusading pastor, with a chip on his shoulder. Then another may be a benevolent old uncle who has named you in his will. Finally one may be like a vigorous and efficient banker who questions your credit and only gives you what is coming to you.

It is not machines that make the modern newspaper; it is the intelligence, the ingenuity, the integrity, and the courage of its editors. True, every great newspaper must have a plant that has

made all modern invention serve its purpose until it, itself, is probably the epitome of this efficient machine age; but this plant is only the tool in the hands of its editors. One newspaper plant is much like another. They use more or less the same equipment, but one is operated with a higher intelligence, a greater anticipation of future events, a greater knowledge of world trends, and a greater fortitude than the other.

The editors and the staffs of the *New York News*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, and the *Chicago Tribune* would still produce their individual newspapers with the machines of any one of a dozen other newspapers; but the editors of these other newspapers could not, or would not, produce the *New York News*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, or the *Chicago Tribune* with the tools of the latter. Nor would they try. Each staff produces its own newspaper with a definite character and personality stamped on every page like a hallmark. The better the mechanical equipment, the more perfect the typographical production, and no more. The quality of its news and editorials comes from its staff.

The publication of a newspaper is a peculiar business, different from any other and requiring unusual, if not peculiar, talents. It is an art and a profession as well as a business. It must serve the public interest to live, even against its own financial interests, and yet it must sell enough of its products to make money. Although a public institution it must be run as a private enterprise. It exists as a news-vending organization, but it makes the major share of its income from a by-product—advertising. It deals with the public through three separate departments, news-gathering, circulation, and advertising. In many of its functions its decisions must be almost instantaneous. Each day's work is complete in itself, as each newspaper must be. Nothing is left to tomorrow. Nothing is deader than yesterday's newspaper; nothing more uncertain than tomorrow's.

The modern newspaper includes a business office that handles its business relations; an advertising department that sells ad-

vertising; a news department that gathers the news and edits it; an editorial department that comments on the news and produces the editorial page; a composing room that sets the news and advertising into type and makes up the page forms; a stereotyping department that makes matrixes from these page forms and later makes metal cylinders from them for the presses; a press department which prints the newspaper; and a circulation department which distributes the printed newspaper to its readers. Then there may also be a picture department; an art department; a photoengraving department; a Sunday department, which produces the many Sunday features; a library as well as the news "morgue," or "graveyard," where clippings and other information on persons and subjects are on file and ready for use; and a personnel department, which takes care of the interests of the staff. Most of these departments have subdivisions.

It takes a staff of from 2,500 to 3,500 to produce a metropolitan newspaper, and a capital investment of \$5,000,000 upwards. Some large newspapers even make their own newsprint, to assure themselves of an adequate supply at a reasonable price. This does not mean that with \$5,000,000 and a staff one can found a metropolitan newspaper. One can begin it, but to make it a success is another matter. The publisher, unless he can find a new field of public service, will quickly discover that he cannot compete with existing newspapers, each already serving and enjoying the support of its own segment of the public. The trend for many years has been to fewer and bigger and better newspapers. The mortality among newspapers is high; the birth rate low.

The reading content of the modern newspaper comes under three classifications. The first is the news, which is produced under the direction of the managing editor and the news staff and provides a record of the news events of the preceding twenty-four hours. The second is the editorial page, directed by the editor-in-chief or the chief editorial writer and presenting

the opinions of the editors on events. The third is the advertising, which is printed on space sold to businessmen outside the newspaper office for their announcements to the public. It is written by them or their agencies and is controlled by the advertising department. Most responsible newspapers maintain a censorship of advertising to protect the interests of their readers.

On American newspapers great efforts are made to maintain these classifications separate and independent one of the other. These efforts are not always successful.

Now let us consider the newspaper as a functioning unit. We will take a New York morning newspaper, which, of course, is being produced at night and is occupied with the events of the day that has just come to an end, or the new day that is just dawning in the Orient, for the viewpoint is world-wide. The problems on the afternoon newspaper are much the same, with usually less time for dealing with them. It is eight o'clock, and all departments are on the job.

The night managing editor or his assistant, after consultation with the news editors on the volume of news and with the advertising department, which has produced 160 columns of advertisements, decides on a 48-page newspaper. Here arises one of the major problems of the news, for a newspaper cannot increase its size column by column as news pressure demands. It must be increased 2 pages, that is, 16 columns, at a time. On most metropolitan newspapers this may be done up to 44 pages and on some to 48 or more, after which it must be increased 4 pages, or 32 columns, at a time. This may have a serious effect on the treatment of the news. For instance, should the editor require a 50-page issue, he will probably have to make either a 48-page issue, with a drastic cutting of the news space, or a 52-page one, with more space than he needs. In the one case much interesting matter will be left out or severely cut, and in the other, stories will be allowed to run longer and some stories will find their way into the newspaper that would normally be discarded. In our hypothetical newspaper we are allowing our-

selves 224 columns for the news, a liberal amount. Most metropolitan newspapers vary from 160 to 240 columns of news space daily.

In this newspaper of ours, after providing 160 columns for advertisements, the night managing editor apportions the remaining space to the news departments, as follows: editorial page, 8 columns; financial, 53 columns; business news, 8 columns; miscellaneous news in the back pages, such as weather reports, army orders, fire record, etc., 20 columns; city desk, 25 columns; suburban, 3 columns; telegraph desk for Washington, Albany, and the nation, 25 columns; foreign desk, 18 columns; sports, 30 columns; society, 7 columns; obituaries, 5 columns; news of the theater, the movies, and music, etc., 6 columns; books, 2 columns; art, 1 column; index of the news, 2 columns; and pictures, 11 columns. This is a fair sample of the division of news space in one of the large New York morning newspapers, being in fact the space "layout" for one of them on the night before this was written.

News of all kinds is pouring into the office. Correspondents in Europe, after midnight, are putting the finishing touches on the day's work. Others in Shanghai, Tokyo, and Manila after breakfast on the following day (being a day ahead) are checking up on dispatches sent the night before, to make sure that no early morning developments have changed the news, or are writing new stories. The Washington Bureau is still at work on the activities of the federal government. The Albany staff is doing the same for the state government. City Hall reporters are at their typewriters in the city room. The Wall Street staff has done its job and has gone for the day, leaving one man on watch. One hundred or more general news reporters are writing their stories or taking news by telephone from district men all over the city. The critics are going to the theater, the opera, the movies, or whatever may be doing in their respective fields. The sports department is at work on the sports news of the day, with two men at a championship fight due to start at

Madison Square Garden at ten o'clock. Local correspondents in a hundred cities have been in touch with the news editors and are filing their stories on order. Picture editors are making layouts to illustrate the news, selecting from hundreds of pictures, some taken by office photographers, others supplied by picture services, and others coming in by sound photo from key points in the United States and some by radiophoto from Europe.

Meanwhile the news services are also functioning at top speed. The Associated Press, the United Press, or the International News Service is sending in thousands of words on all phases of world news. Some newspapers take two, some all three services. The Associated Press alone delivers 175,000 words in twenty-four hours. The Canadian Press is sending also, its daily file approximating 17,000 words. So is the City News Association, which covers the routine police, court, and municipal news of Manhattan and the Bronx. It totals 75,000 words daily. The Standard News Association, giving news of Jersey and other suburbs, is producing 25,000. We are going to have nearly 500,000 words of news matter from which to produce our morning newspaper, not to mention pictures, and with 224 columns of space we can use only about 200,000 words.

Every modern method of saving time and overcoming distance is being employed to get this news into the office. The telegraph, the telephone, the wireless, the airplane, the mail, has each brought its quota. Full details of important events that occurred a few hours before in some remote corner of the world are already in the office and pictures to illustrate them may be riding the radio waves. A few minutes after events have occurred in New York, Chicago, Washington, New Orleans, or Los Angeles the editor concerned is dealing with them. Automatic telegraph machines, whole batteries of them, are bringing in a flood of news with monotonous precision. The office's own wireless operators are trying to make contact with an

explorer in the polar regions or a ship in distress at sea. The world looks small from a news desk. The editor can speak to the Governor of Texas, the Mayor of San Francisco, or a correspondent in London with the same ease and almost as quickly as he can call up his own suburban home.

All this volume of news has to be read and appraised and edited—it is the equivalent of seven average-length novels—in a few hours, for our first edition is timed for 10:45 P.M. and shortly after eleven o'clock there will be leaving the Grand Central Terminal, the Pennsylvania Station, and the stations in New Jersey the trains that must carry thousands of copies of our newspaper to its readers throughout the nation. At that time, 10:45, the type will have to be in page forms, and the forms locked ready for the stereotypers and the presses.

Here is where news judgment enters. The editors must produce a budget of news that will cover the important and interesting events of the day. It must be intelligible to the average reader; complex problems must be clarified; unknown places illustrated with maps; background supplied for continuing situations; each important kind of news grouped together and displayed with other stories of its classification. Wide knowledge and quick decision are necessary on a hundred different news items.

The editor of each classification, city, telegraph, foreign, sports, financial, and amusements, works at a news desk with as many as a dozen assistants, or subeditors. Here each classification of news comes under close scrutiny and expert judgment. Each man is a specialist and knows his own news field and the men who make the news. He has the background in knowledge and experience. His own kind of news reaches each of these editors, and he reads it with a view to its significance and interest, and to space requirements. When his "copy" is written and edited, each fact checked and verified, and if necessary amplified or clarified, he writes headlines for it, the kind of "head" that its display requires. The completed story then goes to the com-

posing room to be set in type. Shortly afterwards the editor has it again in proof, and he can check it once more and resolve all doubts before it appears on the street or goes into the mails in the finished newspaper.

The night managing editor and one or more assistant managing editors have, meanwhile, been appraising the whole news picture of the day, one of them going through this great mass of news copy in the original and the others reading the proofs. The executive editors of the various news classifications have been in constant touch with them and have presented written or verbal summaries of each important story. The display for page one is then arranged. It may include some major news "break" that calls for large headlines or it may be just the "usual run" that calls for normal treatment. The average newspaper has eight columns to a page, and the news stories the editors consider most significant, or most interesting, will find their way into the eight columns on page one. But all news is relative; a story that would not make page one on a big news night might do so on some quiet night.

After arranging the display for page one, the editors do the same for the second front—most large newspapers are now printed in two sections—and make plans for "dressing" other important pages. Where possible every page in the newspaper is now "dressed" to look its best, with pictures and texts placed to make it attractive. By half-past nine these page layouts are finished and in the hands of the executive editors concerned, including a battery of "make-up" editors.

The make-up editors direct the placing of the type in the page forms and are charged with the responsibility of getting all important news into each edition, frequently cutting the stories so that the type will fit into the space available. In a mail edition a story of purely local interest may be left out to make room for a scandal in Kansas City or a riot in Detroit, while in the late city edition a story from Texas may be dropped to make space for a New York story or for later and more

important news. With page charts showing the placing of the advertising and knowing the news requirements, these make-up editors, each with specified pages to handle, go to the composing room to close the edition—on time if they can. A modern newspaper is rarely late.

It is still one hour and fifteen minutes before edition time. The departmental editors, with full knowledge of what they must accomplish, concentrate on getting their news into proper shape and into the composing room in time to have it set and placed in the page forms. The night managing editor and his assistants now concentrate on the proofs, watching the editing of the copy, the accuracy of the facts, the adequacy of the coverage, and the clarity of the writing, and checking up on the headlines. They may order a story or a head improved. They may find a story is getting more space or more display than it is worth. A new important story may break that will change the layout of page one. They may order pictures, or more background, for another. They must maintain a steady vigilance, for in the final reckoning they are held responsible for every last word in the newspaper.

At 10:15 the night managing editor or one of the assistant managing editors goes into the composing room to take charge, leaving one man in command of the news department to see that everything moves smoothly and to take care of any last-minute news developments. Arriving in the composing room, he immediately checks on the progress made to that minute. Tonight he finds that sixteen of the forty-eight pages have been closed. These are the editorial page, the financial and business pages, the miscellaneous agate pages, and a page advertisement. There are thirty-two pages to go, and now twenty-eight minutes in which to close them.

He takes a glance about the large room. These thirty-two page forms, all with large gaping holes in them, some with advertisements already placed and news type missing, others with news type placed and space left for advertisements, are

sitting on steel benches, known as "stones"—from the days when they were actually topped by stone. Editors and compositors are working over them. Some pages are being held open for stories that are fixed for that exact spot and have not yet been set in type. Type is scattered all over the room. Here is the type of a story without the "head" and there the "head" of another without the type. Another story is waiting for a "take" that is being set. Seventy or more linotype machines are rushing as many stories or parts of stories into type. Proofs are being "run" to the editors and to the proofroom. The editors glance at them and inform the compositors where the story must be placed. The proofroom reads them and rushes through corrections.

Here again speed and precision are vital. Not only must the news be placed in the open pages but it must be placed in proper sequence and in proper position. Readers are accustomed to turning to definite places for the news. It must be there for them. The obituaries must go on the obituary pages, the sports news into the sports pages, the review of the latest motion picture into the amusement pages. What is more, the news must be grouped by subject. All labor news must be together. Political stories must be grouped on one page, or on consecutive pages. News cannot be scattered indiscriminately through the paper. It must not be a hodgepodge—not even in the first edition. It may happen that some important story may "drop" in type after the pages for its classification have closed, in which event an editor may place it elsewhere rather than have it miss the edition. It will be in its proper place in the next edition.

Everywhere is the rattle of machinery. Invention within the newspaper has kept pace with invention without. The linotype machine is almost human. An operator sits at each, a piece of news copy in front of him. He touches a keyboard and a letter form drops into a line space. He touches some more; he drops in space bars to separate the words, and he has a line set. He touches a lever and moves on to set the next line. The line he

has set travels into position in front of a mold, where molten metal is squirted on it and a solid line of type is cast, and it drops into position with the preceding lines. The machine itself then redistributes the brass letter forms back into their respective channels in the magazine ready to be used again. Another battery of machines with a variety of special type and operating on the same principle sets the headlines. In the advertising end of the composing room are monotypes which set the type a letter at a time, casting each separately. The photoengraving department makes picture and advertisement "cuts"—metal reproductions of the originals—by a combination of photography and chemical etching. Only in a few advertisements, where unusual type or unusual arrangement makes it necessary, is type set by hand.

Type is moving from these machines and, still hot, is placed in the page forms. Completed advertisements are rushed in on "trucks" and into the space bought by their sponsors. The finished headline joins the type for the story. The picture cuts are inserted. Everything dovetails into place. Editors give their O.K., and the page forms are locked and rushed to the stereotypers and then speed on their way to the presses.

The minutes are flying. The executive editor is going through the last-minute proofs, making a few "must" corrections, changing a word in a headline, giving more prominent position to a story that turned out better than expected. He asks a make-up editor to get in a story that should go to New England with this edition. He watches the clock. He watches the blackboard showing the closing of the pages. They must not be badly bunched, for that would choke the stereotyping department and delay the start of the edition. There must be an even flow. He may order some in with "fillers," interesting stories without a time element that have been standing in type for just such an occasion. But tonight it will not be necessary. At 10:30 there are twenty-three pages still to go and at 10:40 there are nine. At 10:44 two pages are still open.

The page-one form sits on the "stone" with one open, gaping column waiting for type. It is being held for the fight at Madison Square Garden. The other is page 22, to carry the "jump," or carry over, into the sports pages. Beside the forms are several "galleys"—long metal trays—with type and headlines. Five or six compositors stand ready for quick action. There is one minute to go.

A sudden consultation of the executives is held on the spot. The night managing editor is there; so is the sports editor, the chief make-up editor, the foreman of the composing room, the mechanical superintendent, and the circulation manager. The situation is quickly appraised.

Joe Louis, the world's heavyweight champion, is fighting, with the title at stake. The Garden is crowded to the rafters. There is great interest in the result. The fight was scheduled to start at ten o'clock, and to continue for fifteen rounds. It was seven minutes late in starting. The champion was expected to win quickly with a knockout. This would have made no problem for the editors. Instead he encountered unexpected opposition. The fight has gone on round after round with the challenger still on his feet, each round using up four precious minutes, three for the fighting and one for the rest period. At 10:44 the thirteenth round is just starting.

The sports editor reports the challenger in a bad way. He can hardly last a round. He was floored twice in the twelfth. The circulation manager wants the result in the edition for the street sales. The night managing editor decides to hold for the finish.

At the ringside sit four staff men, probably the coolest men in the Garden. Two are sports reporters, each with a portable typewriter in front of him, and two are expert telegraph operators, their hands on their "bugs" with direct wires into the sports department. One man is writing on his typewriter and passing the written sheets, each with one brief paragraph, to his operator. The other is dictating direct to the wire. The for-

mer is writing the story; the latter is reporting the fight round by round. Seconds after each blow is struck it is recorded in the home office and a minute later is in hot type in the composing room. Eleven rounds are already in the edition. The twelfth is being set. The thirteenth is being fought.

In the type galleys we noticed beside the page forms are six different leads, or introductions, for the story and six different headlines to cover the six possible results of the fight at edition time. They had been written an hour earlier. One of these leads and one of these heads tell of Louis's winning by a knockout and one each by a decision. Two more do the same for the challenger. The two others cover the two other contingencies; one a draw, the other an unfinished fight. All of these leads and heads omit the number of the round. These are set separately, one line of type for each of the fifteen rounds, in some such words as "The fight ended in the seventh round" for the story, and fifteen more for the headlines. A compositor will drop one in the lead and one in the head as the result warrants.

Much material has been prepared before the fight got under way and is already in the "jump" page. There is a story about the weighing-in ceremonies, another on the final day of the two contestants, and possibly one about the crowd. Also before the start of the main fight, details of the preliminaries were written and set into type. Pictures are already in place.

With the start of the big fight, however, our two reporters really went into action. The man doing the story probably began much as follows: "Louis was the first to enter the ring," and went on to give a running account of everything that happened. At least two columns are in type by the end of the twelfth round and ready to drop into the edition. The man doing the round-by-round story keeps abreast of the fight, blow by blow. As each round is ended the latter's account of it is complete. The man on the lead catches up during the minute rest periods.

A telephone in the composing room connects with the sports

department and the direct wires to the Garden. The sports editor stands with his ear to the receiver. Then comes the flash:

"Louis wins by knockout."

The composing room springs into action. The proper head with the crossline for the thirteenth round is placed in page one. The lead quickly follows, also with its line on the thirteenth round. The running story of the fight is then added. Page one is locked up in ten or twelve seconds and goes to the stereotypers. The remainder of the story is rushed to page 22 and in a few seconds it also is locked and on its way. The fight had been stopped by the referee at 1:18 of the thirteenth round, or 10:45:18. The edition closed at 10:46, one minute late, but a minute that can be recovered by the stereotypers and pressmen.

In two minutes the stereotypers have made matrixes from these two pages, one on each of two molders, with the exact pressure needed to make a perfect impression on the papier-mâché. The matrixes, still damp, are rushed to the casting machines. Four minutes are required to dry them, using a temperature of 600 degrees, and to pack them. Then they are placed in the automatic stereotyping machines and four minutes later metal cylindrical casts are ready. In two minutes more these cylinders are locked on the presses, a button is pressed, and the presses are turning out thousands of copies of the newspaper, each with a full account of the match. Twelve minutes have elapsed since the page forms were locked in the composing room, and thirteen since the technical knockout in the Garden.

By the time the fight fan has squeezed his way out of the crowded Garden and strolled over to Times Square, a couple of blocks away, scores of boys are offering the paper for sale at street corners, and trucks are rushing thousands of copies to stations to catch trains, and to distant points in the city and suburbs.

But the newspaper staff does not stop there. That was just one edition; another is coming. Our two men in the Garden are also at work. The man doing the story starts at once on a new lead, a straightaway story of the fight telling how it was fought and

won, with an analysis of the strategy of each fighter and any other interesting features. It moves in takes over the open telegraph wire. The other man, his round-by-round story done, is busy getting the personal story or statements of the fighters or their managers, and anything else of interest.

About an hour later the second edition goes to press with a complete and smooth-reading account of the fight, with new stories that have developed in the interim, with many of the first-edition pages redressed to make them more attractive and with many stories done over or amplified, or cut as space or news developments required. And so on through the night, until the final "good night" to the news staff and the mechanical department about five o'clock in the morning.

Editors, however, cannot always count on such exact precision. Editors do not control the news; and big stories have the habit of breaking at embarrassing moments and right on top of editions. Then there are human and mechanical failures to consider. Fortunately these are rare on well-organized newspapers.

On just such an edition as we have been watching the worst of all accidents happened on *The New York Times*. Page one was the last closed and locked. A boy stood ready with a truck to move the form to the stereotypers. In pushing it from the stone to the truck it slipped and crashed on the floor. The type scattered all over the place.

The boy took one look at the mess. He made for the door. He has not been seen or heard from since.

Editors and compositors made for the proofs and the type. In thirteen minutes they had reassembled the page and closed the form. The edition missed one train.

Then there was the night *The Times* entertained a professor of journalism. For years this professor had sent letters to *The Times* finding fault with the make-up and news contents of the first edition—the edition he got in the Midwest. Finally in pique the managing editor sent him this telegram: "The first time you are in New York come in and show us how to do it."

He came. He observed the progress of the edition through the news department and then went to the composing room for the closing. It was one of the worst in the history of the office. Fifteen minutes before edition time thirty-three pages were wide open. Type and advertisements were scattered all over the huge room. Important stories were late, and so were advertisements. Other stories were only half done. There were two late news breaks to get into the edition. It was a sad spectacle. Editors and other executives said nothing to indicate anything unusual. They went to work hoping against hope that they could close on time, but expecting to be late. By some stroke of fortune everything "clicked" at the last moment and the edition closed on time, but with the pages badly bunched. It was the "sloppiest" closing in years.

The professor said nothing. Back in the news department the night managing editor asked, "Well, what recommendations have you to make now?"

The professor hesitated a moment.

"None," he responded. "I didn't think you were going to make it. It's a miracle."

It is all that—a modern miracle. The human and mechanical equipment that gathers the news all over the world, brings it into the office, digests and edits it, spreads it over the pages of the daily newspaper, and starts this newspaper in turn on its way back to the far corners of the world, all in a few hours, is certainly one of the marvels of our modern civilization.

III. What Is News?

LIKE electricity, news is everywhere and in most things; and like electricity it is difficult to explain exactly what it is. There has never been an adequate definition of news, probably because it is an elusive thing that ebbs and flows and is forever changing. It is like that floating island in Florida; you can stand on it here today, it is elsewhere tomorrow. It is the stuff of which history is made, yet it may be as capricious as the wafted thistledown in a summer breeze and as fleeting as the rainbow after a sun shower. Editors catch it in their hands and hold it for an edition or two. Then it is gone, and the hunt is on for more. The eternal hunt!

The ingredients of news are well known and easily determined. Its sources are common enough. Its effects on the reader and the community are well established. Courts have ruled that it is a commodity—a commodity that costs millions of dollars daily to gather and distribute—that in fact there are property rights in a news story, however perishable. An editor can recognize and appraise news instantly; yet he may be embarrassed in attempting to explain why. Many ponderables and imponderables enter his judgment. Many elements combine to make a good news story.

What is news for one newspaper may not interest another. What is important news for one community may be of no importance to another. Yet one news story can be of interest and significance to every living man.

The faculty for recognizing and appraising news is popularly

known as "a nose for news." It is a sort of sixth sense. Either one has it or one has not. If one has, it can be developed and refined; if one has not, nothing can be done about it.

It is remarkable at times how similar is the appraisal of a major news break by the editors of the nation, as judged by the headline display, although there may be a wide variation in their approach to it, as judged by the way it is written. They have all measured the same values to a nicety. We will attempt to explain these recognizable values; and meanwhile define news only *as a compilation of facts on events of current interest or importance to the readers of the newspaper printing it.*

We have all heard of the rather silly remark made in a light moment by a great editor: "If a dog bites a man, that is not news; if the man bites the dog, that is news." This makes a pert phrase, but it is a bad mix-up of news values. Suppose a mad dog bites the President on his way to deliver his annual message to Congress. That you may be sure will be news in every newspaper in the world. Suppose on the other hand that some escaped lunatic in a frenzy bites a stray dog; what newspaper would print it? In news, as in law, the dignity and importance of the person involved are major factors. An insult to the village justice of the peace is one thing; the same insult to the august Supreme Court of the United States is something else.

The President of the United States is always news. So are the other great rulers of the world, especially the dictators, Mussolini, Hitler, and Stalin. They represent the might and dignity of their peoples. What they think, what they say, what they do, is always important news, because it affects the lives of millions of people in their own countries and may well affect the whole world. Public interest is centered on them and the public wants to know even trivial details of their private lives. The fact that Hitler is a vegetarian; that Stalin locks himself up in the Kremlin; that Mussolini flies an airplane; that the Emperor of Japan plays golf; or that Roosevelt has a toothache may have far-reaching consequences. They are the men who lead and rule the

world; they can do nothing that may not be important, and so of news value.

What is true on a world-scale is true only in less degree in the nation, the state, and the local community. Senators, governors, mayors, judges, industrialists, labor leaders, clergymen, merchants, scientists, college presidents, professors, and scholars affect the lives we lead, the things we do, and frequently what we think, and so are of news importance. They help to make the news by making the events that produce it. Their opinions of the present scene are of interest, for tomorrow their ideas may be realized in action. Something must happen to make news, for it is a dynamic, moving thing, and these are the men who dominate the affairs of the country. Individually they may be small men—often they are—but their positions are charged with dignity, importance, and news.

Then there are the colorful figures of the community, the nation, and the world. Men like Lindbergh, Caruso, Einstein, and Babe Ruth, the doers of great deeds, are a fertile source of news, whether they like it or not. When a colorful personality is joined with great position and wide influence the combination is irresistible. Men like Henry Ford, Theodore Roosevelt, Thomas A. Edison, and John D. Rockefeller stir the imagination. Some of them are popular idols. All make a deep impression on their age. They do big things in a big way, and even small things in an interesting way. They make the world of tomorrow. The public wants to know all about them and everything they do. Public curiosity can be insatiable.

The dignity and importance of the event, itself, can be equally important. The great affairs of the governments of the world always make news. Their diplomatic interplay, their wars and civil wars, their commercial rivalries and tariff agreements, their imperial and colonial policies, almost always involve American interests and frequently touch American lives. The invasion of Ethiopia, the battle of ideologies in Spain, the sinking of a gunboat on the Yangtze River can be more vital to Americans than

important events right at home. We may pride ourselves on our splendid isolation, but the world is small these days, its activities integrated, and intelligent Americans keep an eye on it.

Action abroad may forecast action at home. A sit-down strike in a Hungarian mine is quickly followed by sit-down strikes in France, and a whole epidemic of them in America. Labor discovers a new weapon. The closing of a bank in Vienna, the freezing of short-term credits in Germany, and financial collapse in Australia mark the beginning of a world-wide depression of unprecedented severity, with millions unemployed in the United States. Moscow's decision to dump wheat on the Liverpool market smashes world-prices and the Kansas farmer must make his Ford car do another year and there are bread lines in Detroit. And so it goes, yesterday's problem in some foreign country may be tomorrow's problem in America.

Here again the colorful scene and the colorful personality may heighten interest in the news. The picturesque and archaic rites at the coronation of a new king in Westminster Abbey, the elaborate and solemn ritual of the Vatican, the stiff formalities of the Imperial Court in Tokyo, the ancient ceremonials of the burial of Tut-ankh-Amen, are followed with interest by millions of prosaic Americans and provide a vivid contrast to the drab lives many of them lead. Much foreign news is living history, as is, for that matter, much of our domestic news, and we all like to feel that we have a part in it, however minor.

Great trends sweep the opinion of the world, and the alert editor is soon conscious of them. They cross frontiers and oceans and continents. The aftermath of the first World War brought a whole train of them. They affect political thought and political action, as for example, the twin ideologies of fascism and communism. They affect literature. They affect art. They affect women's styles, from the ballroom to the bathing beach. They change our diets and slenderize our figures. They revolutionize our mode of living. They find their votaries and their antagonists.

onists, and the world moves on. They make news, for no picture of the present scene is complete without them.

The activities of our own domestic governments are our most fertile source of news. Here public interest dominates the news columns. The news editor considers this his first obligation. American citizens must be kept informed of the doings of the legislators they elect to public office, so that they can offer intelligent criticism, make their wants known, and poll intelligent votes. Much of this news makes dull reading, but it is important news and is treated as such. A new tax bill, a social security program, changes in the tariff, or revision of labor legislation directly affects millions of citizens. Frequently it affects their pocketbooks. It may even involve their jobs and livelihood. Roosevelt's New Deal with its attack on old institutions and ways of doing things demonstrated how vital governmental news can be. It revolutionized our working conditions, our conception of the role of government in our private affairs, our banking and financial setup, our whole industrial system; and even laid hands on the Supreme Court. Our newspapers, many of them hostile to its policies, did a first-class job on reporting it, for, like it or not, their editors knew that it was news that their readers had to have.

News that affects the family purse is always important, for it reaches right down to the individual reader. Changes in the tax laws, in transit fares, in telephone, gas, and electricity rates, in the cost of living, hit the family where it is most vulnerable. A sharp rise in the price of steak can be more interesting to more people than a sordid murder or a cheap divorce. In New York a grafting politician might well walk off with the City Hall without more than a perfunctory protest, but let anyone attempt to increase the five-cent subway fare and he would instantly have a political storm on his hands. One is everybody's business and so no one's; the other takes cash right out of each individual's pocket and he is ready to protest.

We have now observed that dignity, importance, color, and

public interest are major ingredients in news, but they are not the only ones. Human interest, novelty, surprise, suspense, mystery, and violence are also important. Any one of these can help to make a news story of wide appeal, and often several of them can enter into the making of the one story. There is seldom a story that combines them all.

The abdication of Edward VIII came nearest in recent years to including them all, and as a consequence was one of the best news stories of a generation. It involved a position of great dignity and a colorful personality. It had importance and public interest, for it shook the mighty British Empire to its foundations. It also included human interest, because it involved romance and centered on an American lady of humble origin. It was certainly a novelty, being in fact the first time that a British king had abdicated the throne for any reason. It was so surprising that many people could not believe it until it broke forth in the open in the final days. And it carried suspense, if not mystery, for it was weeks before it got out of the rumor stage and into the realm of certainty. Had it also carried violence, such as riots, or an attempt at revolution, it would have run the gamut of journalistic emotions. As it was it made a great story, and the fact that the British newspapers tried to suppress it—an attempt that makes them look rather silly now—made it all the better for enterprising American editors.

Human interest and novelty usually go hand in hand. Editors are partial to stories that touch the heart, but naturally they cannot keep repeating the same formula, so they want something new or novel. This type of story covers a wide range, including the heiress who elopes with the butler, the man who steals a loaf of bread to feed sixteen starving children, the birth of the latest hippopotamus at the zoo, the dog which rescues his master from the fire, the blind girl who leads her class in school, and the beautiful girl from Arkansas who came to Broadway with high hope and ends by turning on the gas. This kind of story allows great latitude in writing and display. Some new angle or feature

may lift it out of the ordinary and give a star reporter a chance to show what he can do. Editors like a few of them in every edition, for they feel that they brighten the paper. They are the answer to Joseph Pulitzer's maxim: "Make them weep; make them laugh."

The birth of the Dionne quintuplets was one of the greatest human interest stories of all time, and certainly had all the novelty an editor could desire. Their appearance in a rough farm cottage in Northern Ontario and their early struggle for life touched the heart of every mother, and of every child, and of most grown men. As they survived and grew into five healthy and rollicking little girls interest in them increased rather than lagged, and they continue one of the best news sources. Curiosity about them will probably go on until they finally marry and go their five separate ways.

Surprise is rarely an element in a major story these days, for the radio usually scatters the facts over the face of the land before the newspapers can reach the street, but suspense and mystery do figure in many. When these enter an important news story they overwhelm all other elements and make a story that intrigues the whole nation. An instance of this was the Lindbergh kidnapping. The fate of the child was in suspense for months and the mystery of the criminal for more than a year. There was scarcely a man or woman who did not have his or her private theory about it and measure it against the known facts. This story incidentally carried surprise, for it broke late at night and the nation read the horror of it at breakfast the next morning.

Stories of violence, the violence of nature and of man, will always be news, but they must verge on the cataclysmic to get prominent display. Ordinary violence is treated for what it is worth. A swift hurricane that devastates a wide area in Florida, leaving death and ruin in its train; an earthquake that rocks and levels a city; a drought that lays waste a vast farming section; a war that brings death and destruction and terror to millions of

people; a revolution that upsets the old order of things, all make major news. They all shock our natural calm and give us a feeling of terror. They lead us to thank whatever gods may be for our own security.

The subject of violence leads naturally to crime news, which rightly should come last. Despite the wide criticism of newspapers by persons who could not have examined a newspaper closely, crime news is a very small part of the leading serious newspapers. It averages less than 3 per cent. Its place in the newspaper is probably smaller than its place in our civilization. The picture would not be complete without it. What is more, there is little or no glorification of crime and criminals in serious newspapers. Pictures of criminals are published when they are being sought by the police to help the public identify them; seldom after they are caught. The average murder or holdup gets not a line of type, even in the tabloids. A crime story to make page one must be unusually interesting and involve persons and places of importance. A bawdy row terminating in murder in a Harlem honky tonk would not get into the newspaper; a murder of a person of standing in a fashionable Park Avenue hotel would be rushed onto page one.

A casual glance at the crime statistics of a city like New York will prove the point. The same in less degree is true of other cities. Commissioner Lewis J. Valentine's report for 1936 listed 364 cases of murder and manslaughter, 2,580 of felonious assault, 1,240 of assault and battery, and 2,369 of burglaries. Felony complaints reached the aggregate of 19,310. Arrests by the police for all causes were 826,887. Nor is this all. The figure for missing persons in New York for 1936 was 10,796, enough to populate a good-sized town, and the total unidentified dead was 888. Traffic accidents for the year produced the alarming figures of 905 deaths and 32,975 injuries, despite a drop of 127 in deaths and 2,357 in injuries from the year 1935.

It must be clear from these figures that a violent death in New York is not news and that neither is the average crime.

With a murder a day and seven or eight burglaries, one or more makes little difference in the life of the city. Almost all of these are mean, sordid affairs, of no interest except to the persons and the neighborhood concerned. They offer neither novelty nor color; neither importance nor surprise. A few may get a paragraph or two but most of them will be ignored and the news space saved for matters of more importance. The few that do find their way into the news columns must have unusual drama, for editors are aware of criticism and lean backwards in their efforts to avoid it.

At the same time there is not a city editor in the nation who does not relish a "good" murder story; but it must be "good" beyond question. It must involve a man or woman of position or glamour, or be done for high stakes. If it happens at a good address and provides a first-class mystery, a problem that seems to defy solution, all the better. Such a story not only interests editors, it sets the whole community talking and makes amateur detectives of otherwise rational people. Cases like the Snyder-Gray murder, the Hall-Mills murder, and the Elwell murder all came into this category and all got page-one display and many columns of space on inside pages. The Snyder case was quickly solved, and the horror of it shocked the country; but the Hall-Mills case and the Elwell case still await solution and the arrest of the murderers.

The idea prevalent among many intelligent people, especially clergymen and teachers, that editors are hard put to find material to fill their columns and so turn of necessity to sordid crime news should be corrected here. The contrary is the truth. News editors have far more news than they can find room for, excepting on rare occasions such as three-day holidays at Labor Day, Christmas, and New Year's. There is competition for every inch of space in the daily newspaper and every story that gets in does so only on its merits, much as a youth matriculates into college—and there are no athletic scholarships. Every story is weighed again for each succeeding edition, and the lighter ones

make room for new material and for material crowded out of the earlier edition.

Until the beginning of the first World War American newspapers emphasized local and domestic news. The reasons for this were simple. Americans were concerned largely with their own problems—the conquering of the wilderness and the building up of a great industrial nation. Cable and telegraph tolls were high. The telephone was limited in range and costly. The wireless was in its infancy. So was the airplane. Foreign news was expensive and with few exceptions metropolitan newspapers did not try to cover it first hand, taking what foreign news was offered by the news services. Crime also got more display and relatively more space, the newspapers being smaller.

The 1914 War widened our horizons. It changed news emphasis, as it changed almost everything else. It came at a time of revolution in communications. Millions of Americans had their roots in the belligerent nations. All Americans were interested or involved in some manner, until ultimately the United States, itself, became a participant. Overnight we became a world-power. Our sons were fighting on European battlefronts and our ships were patrolling European waters. Our factories, our mines, and our farms were speeding munitions and foodstuffs across the Atlantic. We changed suddenly from a debtor to a creditor nation, with billions of dollars owed to our government and to our citizens in a dozen foreign countries. We had a stake in the result and a part in the settlement.

Here was the biggest news story of all time. American newspapers and news services spared no expense and no effort to bring every last detail to American readers. Foreign bureaus were established. Correspondents were placed on many news fronts. Facilities were expanded. Editions were enlarged. Circulations increased. Editors and readers found we were definitely a factor in world affairs and that events in remote countries could have repercussions in Mill Street, in Wall Street, in Washington, and in the agricultural West. Our newspapers had

to cover world news as adequately as they did news in their immediate neighborhood.

The years following the war saw a tremendous expansion in news interests. The resulting treaties brought discussion and conflict. Our foreign trade and foreign financial dealings mounted to astronomical figures. Reparations and war debts were live issues. Domestic prosperity reached unprecedented heights, spurred on by credit inflation. Scientific and technological progress set a dizzy pace. Newspaper advertising broke all records and so did newspaper revenues. Shorter working hours, longer vacations, and filled purses turned millions of people to cultural matters or to travel abroad. Intellectual curiosity discovered new fields. The news exploitation of the Einstein theory made an obscure German professor a world character. The news presentation of the unearthing of the tomb of Tut-ankh-Amen made the name of that unknown Pharaoh a household word. New theories from the laboratories, exploration, archaeology, astronomy, and airplane flights over oceans became major news. The news kept abreast of a merry decade—the decade of the boot-legger and the speakeasy.

Then came the depression with new stress on economics and social problems and a re-examination of our capitalistic civilization. It brought many new problems and also a new emphasis in news. The gold standard, inflation, and stabilization of currencies became page-one stories. So did national planning, conservation, relief in its many forms, social security, job insurance, and housing. Labor disorders and labor demands filled columns of space. Economic security became as vital as political security. Brain trusters and college professors entered the spotlight. No solution for some phase of the depression was too hare-brained to merit news consideration, for editors might on the morrow find it enacted into law.

This was all that was needed to complete the news picture. Now the news in our leading newspapers covers the full sweep

of the physical and mental activities of mankind from railroad carloadings to a Sibelius symphony.

The years immediately after the World War saw the development of still another news phenomenon—the tabloid newspaper with its own news standards and treatment. The tabloid had been a success in London for many years, featuring pictorial and lighter treatment of the news. In America it retained the pictures but took a different slant on the news, placing the major emphasis on crime, divorce, scandal, and gossip. It took up the yellow journalism of the turn of the century and carried it to new perfection—or degradation, depending on the viewpoint. It found a reader field largely its own and amassed vast circulations. It even found new advertising fields. It did, however, raid the circulation and the revenue of the less conservative older newspapers, helping to kill off three or four of them in New York alone.

The tabloid's success has mystified publishers and editors of other newspapers. Its smaller and more convenient size—which, however, is a distinct handicap in the display of news—and its numerous pictures, comics, and features do not completely explain its appeal to a numerous class of readers in the great cities. Its news coverage is more often than not scanty and cheap, being devoted in many cases largely to local scandal. The limitations of its news space and the brevity of its stories on national and international news take it outside the scope of normal journalism. Its influence on other newspapers and journalism has been small, being confined mostly to newspapers that have come into direct competition with it, the others going their own way serenely. The tabloids have developed their own field, and they seemingly pre-empt it.

All news, even in the tabloids, is relative. Editors deal with the day in which they are working and the next edition on the presses. They gather and display the news on the basis of what is in hand. On a day of big news, with many interesting stories coming from many sources, or one dominating story, like a na-

tional election or a great war, even a good story may get brief treatment and find itself on an inside page. On another day with everything quiet on the news front a minor story of limited news value and appeal may find itself dressing up page one. News standards fluctuate with the news, as do news values. There is a wide variation in the news interest and appeal of the newspaper from day to day. Editors don't make news; they only record it.

IV. The High Art of Reporting

THE REPORTER is the eyes and ears of the newspaper. Its information is no better than his. He is everywhere. He sees everything. He hears everything. He records everything. His rights are guaranteed by the Constitution. He has access to the public records. He has quasi-official status at governmental functions. He consorts with the leaders of men. Even high-ranking officials dare not restrict his movements, for he represents the public, often more truly than its own elected representatives. He is there to inform citizens who cannot be present of what is going on. He wields great power and influence, usually unaware of it. His courage, his honesty, his accuracy in observation are vital factors in our democracy.

He is the anonymous historian of the present who supplies the data for the historian of the future; but of the two he is the more important, for he is dealing with the living, moving life about him and he knows its personalities and events first-hand. Sometimes he must write as he runs; often he tells much less than he knows, for libel laws may keep him to the bare facts; but he generally realizes what it is all about and could write in the present what may have to wait until leading actors in the drama have disappeared from the scene. He may be pardoned his cynicism.

His daily work involves intelligence of a high order, wide information of men and events, a sound educational background, and sure judgment. It also demands good character, sobriety, high purpose, and industry. Nothing less can make the grade

in these days of speed and accuracy and objectivity in the coverage of news.

The reporter has been much maligned on the screen, on the stage, and in certain books. Most of these characterizations have come from the hands of postgraduates of a rowdy journalism that flourished for a time in Chicago, Denver, and elsewhere and quickly died the death it deserved. Nothing could be more perverted than the portrayal of the unkempt reporter gulping a dozen highballs before slamming into a typewriter to make the edition with his story, while two score roaring lunatics dash about under the direction of a hysterical and bulldozing city editor, who is yelling orders when not answering six telephones. Newspapers are not produced by drunkards and lunatics. The city staff of the metropolitan newspaper is a smooth, fast-functioning machine, one of the most competent of this age of efficiency. The reporter and his city editor are quiet, capable, and educated gentlemen. They may take a drink after the day's work, as do many other men who work under high nervous tension. But that is all.

The reporter has three functions, all of which enter into every news story: he must gather the facts; he must write his story; he must get the story into the office in time for the edition. One reporter may be a master at gathering news, but weak on writing. Another may be expert in news-writing and weak on news-gathering. Most good reporters are equally competent at gathering the news and writing it. All capable reporters make sure of quick and certain communication with their office, for the best story is worthless if it does not make the edition.

The modern reporter is concerned only with facts. His editors want the facts, and nothing else. His newspaper is read by hundreds of thousands of people, all more or less intelligent, and many of them familiar with and directly concerned with the story he is covering. Any deviation from the truth will bring an avalanche of protest and the inevitable corrections.

Persistence in inaccuracy will end his career as a reporter and may kill off his newspaper. Good will, built on a reputation for accuracy and fairness, is a newspaper's greatest asset. This does not mean that there will not be variations in the accounts of a particular story as it appears in various newspapers—no two persons will ever view an event in exactly the same light—but it will mean that each reporter on the scene will strive for objectivity in his coverage. One will be more successful than another.

Complete objectivity is the first ambition of every reporter and his most difficult problem. His own political, economic, racial, religious, and social background is there with him at all times, no matter how he strives to forget it. It will inevitably intrude, probably without his knowing it, when he wants to be most fair and accurate. For this reason editors want their staffs to represent a cross section of life today and insist on a second man, also trained in objectivity, to edit the reporter's story before it goes into type. Great efforts are made to present a true news picture, but it is not so easy as it seems.

Let us consider a few examples of news coverage. Suppose you are witnessing a motion picture. The theater is dark. Seven hundred of your neighbors are intent on the drama unfolding on the screen. Suddenly there is an explosion. There is a rush for the doors. There is a small panic. The lights are flashed on. Several persons have been injured. The police arrive and take the situation in hand. The editions of the newspapers are going to press an hour or two later. They must have stories about it. How do they get the facts?

The city editors got word of the explosion soon after police headquarters. They rush reporters to the scene. When they arrive certain definite facts are evident. There has been an explosion; there has been a panic; and persons have been injured. They also know the location of the theater and the picture being shown. The rest is lost in confusion. Unless the force of the blast stopped a clock they may have difficulty in deter-

mining the exact time. There will be trouble in finding the cause. The man or men responsible, if a bomb did it, are probably far from the scene. The theater owners themselves may have no idea of a motive. They may have had no known enemies. The reporters question as many persons as they can, but they will find seven hundred versions of what happened immediately before, during, and after the disaster. Everybody present was dazed by the suddenness of it. No one can give a precise and adequate account of it. Yet the reporters must do exactly that for their newspapers.

The reporters get all the information they can on the scene. They get the police version of it. They weigh all this data against their own experience with other explosions. Each gets his office by telephone and gives his information to a rewrite man, also with long experience in reporting, who writes his story, sending it in short takes to the city editor. The latter passes judgment on it too and sends it along to the copy reader, or sub-editor, also with large news experience. It is edited, headlines are written for it, and it is rushed to the composing room to go into type and into the edition.

But is the story accurate and fair in every detail? All these experienced men have tried to make it so. It was the best available information they had at the time that the edition went to press—and that is all that can be expected. You who were present will probably not like it, having your own version, which the reporter did not accept as final. You may get so indignant that you will write a protest to his editor—which the editor, knowing the difficulties inherent in the story, will ignore. Subsequent developments, such as the capture of the criminals, may confirm your version or may change the whole news picture. If it does the newspaper will report that when it occurs. It and its reporters are dealing with the news as it happens and are reporting it as best they can. Like it or not, they can do nothing else about it. They have tried to be correct, and they are so far

as circumstances permit. The same is true of a hundred other news stories.

Let us consider another set of news conditions. We will take the Irish rebellion. The Irish patriots are waging a desperate fight against the British forces. There is much sympathy for them in America. Every newspaper has thousands of readers of Irish descent and is anxious to give complete and fair accounts of it. In an effort to do so, an American newspaper sends one of its best reporters to Ireland to cover it on the spot. Let us suppose that he is stationed in Dublin and has an automobile to get about.

He learns of an attack by the Irish Republicans on a police barracks thirty miles outside Dublin. It is about 11:00 P.M., Dublin time, or 6:00 P.M., New York time. There are no details. He drives to the scene. Certain facts again are evident; the barracks has been burned, three constables have been killed, and three injured. The Republicans made a sudden attack and as suddenly vanished in the night. They are now somewhere in the Wicklow Hills. The reporter looks over the ground. He talks with the survivors, all British constables, who naturally give their version of it. He tries to get some information from Irish neighbors, who have a very vague idea of what it is all about and are afraid to speak frankly. He starts back to Dublin to write his story to make the first edition of his newspaper in America.

In writing his story he leans backwards in his efforts to be fair. His lead states the exact facts: that there was a sudden night raid on the barracks by the Irish Republicans, that three constables were killed, etc. Then he goes on to quote the British survivors on the scene—there being no Irish—and takes care to make it clear that this is their version, and nothing more. He sends his story by cable, and a half hour later it is in his home office. There it is read by the foreign editor and an assistant editor, both familiar with the Irish situation. The story makes the edition.

Next day several Irish-American organizations protest that that newspaper is giving only the British version of events in Ireland, accuse it of circulating British propaganda, and perhaps even charge that it is owned lock, stock, and barrel by Lord Camrose or some other British publisher. Yet this newspaper has given a true account of this event, the only one available at the time of publication, and were it not for its enterprise these very objectors would not know what was going on in Ireland. Its good will and enterprise bring only condemnation.

Every reporter and every newspaper try to get both sides of every story before writing the story. They endeavor to check on all persons and all circumstances. Only when this is impossible is the story printed without it, and then the newspaper is ready to give the other side its say in later editions. On controversial matter, the versions of both sides are given, and the editors feel that they have supplied the material from which the reader can make his own decision.

In many cases, especially in bitter controversies, neither side will state its case accurately and on the contrary will use propaganda and censorships to misrepresent the situation and hide the truth. An instance of this is the civil war in Spain—one of the most difficult news stories in a generation. Partisanship was so intense that each side made all sorts of wild claims that had little basis in reality. Reporters on the scene were forced to write their stories from official communiqués, and rigid military censorships prevented them from going beyond these official expressions. What is more, partisanship ran high among readers, with a steady flow of protest to editors of favoritism to one side or the other whenever an attempt was made to appraise the situation.

As a consequence it was almost impossible to determine and to explain what was going on in Spain, the reader usually having to decide which of two conflicting reports to accept on important news events. Months later it was not known definitely what happened in the destruction of Guernica nor who

was responsible for it, and the battle for Teruel proceeded for weeks with no precise information as to which side held this important point. Both the Nationalists and the Loyalists misrepresented their situation so many times that editors and intelligent readers could not believe them even when they were telling the truth.

This brings us to another function of the reporter, and an important one for the American reader, interpretation of the news. Normally, as has been explained, opinion is left to the editorial columns, and rightly. Editors do not want the reporter's opinion. They want the news facts, and nothing more. There are however many stories, mostly situation stories, that require appraisal in the news columns. These can cover a wide range. They may include the progress of an electoral campaign, a civil war in South America, the progress of a bill through Congress, or an investigation of municipal graft or incompetence. Editors invariably assign their ablest reporters to such stories, reporters of large experience and extensive knowledge in the particular field. Editors give them ample time to make their surveys and then use the stories under the reporters' by-lines—signatures. While the editors and the newspaper cannot avoid responsibility, such stories are the opinions of the reporters and are printed as such. Often the story is accepted solely on the reputation of the reporter. Much foreign and Washington correspondence falls into this category.

Frequently the persons directly concerned in the news to whom the reporter must go are more interested in avoiding publicity or in presenting to the public an exaggerated or false picture of the situation than in the truth. The reporter who believes all he is told will not last long. The competent reporter takes all the data he can get. He may ask embarrassing questions. He checks one person's statement against another's and against the known facts. He looks up past records in the newspaper's morgue or the rogues' gallery. He makes certain

that he has exhausted all available information before he writes a word of his story.

The successful reporter is the one who works and digs for his facts, uncovering new angles, interesting points, and colorful features that escaped his less industrious rivals. Outstanding reporters like Alva Johnston, Bruce Rae, Meyer Berger, and Raymond Daniell are among the best "diggers" in the profession. Their stories are better only because they have worked harder on them. They are never beaten, being indefatigable in their efforts for "complete coverage." Genius in reporting as in most other things is simply the capacity to work. The reporter with one eye on the clock and the other on the pay roll does not travel far.

The office telephone and the press agent's mimeograph have ruined many a reporter. It is too easy to call news sources by telephone and to accept the information on its face value or to take the "handout" and build the news story on it. The conscientious reporter gathers his facts personally and on the spot. He interviews the persons concerned, going beyond the press agent to the man the agent is protecting. He studies the reaction to his question, often judging the sincerity and honesty of the answers by the expression of the eyes. He accepts no detail of the "handout" until it is explained and amplified and clarified. He suspects propaganda. He wants to know motives. He wants background. Above all he wants visualization of the persons and the scene. He does not take the glib reply by telephone as the last word.

This does not mean that the telephone and the press agent have no place in modern journalism. They have. In fact they have helped to revolutionize reporting. The sound reporter, however, uses them sparingly, and accepts the information they convey only when he knows of his own knowledge that it is correct. He prefers to get his own information.

Most of the inaccuracies of modern reporting are caused directly by the telephone. The present tempo has made re-

porters turn more and more to the telephone to get their news into the office. The reporter who gathers the information on the scene often calls the office by telephone and gives his information to a rewrite man, who writes the story. It makes for speed, but it also allows many minor inaccuracies to creep into the newspaper. No matter how careful the reporter and the rewrite man may be, the final story must necessarily suffer from the fact that the man who gathered the facts and was on the scene does not write it. What is more, it almost always lacks the flavor of the event, and much of the color. This is sometimes remedied by having the rewrite man visit the scene and then rush back to the office to write the story on the data gathered by the men who remain on the spot. It is not always possible.

There is rarely difficulty with the main facts of the story, as they can easily be established; the trouble is usually with the details. For instance, one of the New York newspapers recently carried a detailed story on the burning of one of the city's best-known churches. This fire was covered on the spot by seven men operating under the direction of a star reporter, and they all telephoned their information to one of the ablest rewrite men in journalism. He wrote a beautiful story. It was displayed on page one. Every angle was covered. Several pictures helped to make it more realistic. His editors thought it a masterly piece of reporting. Next day they discovered that the rewrite man had the church on the wrong side of the street.

Despite elaborate precautions, minor errors, and major ones too, get into the news columns. No matter how news sources are checked and facts double-checked, reporters and editors make mistakes. Their intentions may be right and their facts wrong. They are human and fallible, and sometimes the harder they try the worse the story turns out. This is particularly true of stories of "office interest." It is difficult to get a story that directly concerns the publisher correctly into any newspaper.

The stupidest "bulls" will intrude. In many cases even his name is spelled incorrectly on the first attempt.

Great care is taken with news of engagements, marriages, and deaths, for most newspapers have been victimized more than once on such news. This has long been the favorite field of the practical joker. Few newspapers will accept such news items by telephone without careful checking back. The editors of *The New York Times* are unusually careful; they have a reputation for accuracy to maintain. One can understand their consternation recently when they discovered a little advertisement in their first edition reading in effect: "Walsh, James D. J. This is to inform my friends that I did not die as announced in the obituary page of *The New York Times*. Please omit flowers." Investigation disclosed that the "news" of Mr. Walsh's untimely death had been telephoned to the office by boyhood friends and confirmed by them later to the reporter checking up on the call. They thought it funny.

Every able and experienced reporter has his private news sources, men whom he has known for many years in the line of his news specialty and who have learned to respect and trust him. A reporter's value to his newspaper may often depend on his news contacts, for in many instances they will not give the news to anybody else. Mayor LaGuardia will not deal with strange reporters, insisting on being "covered" by men he has known on terms of intimacy for years. With the new reporter he is cold and forbidding; with his old friends cordial and open. President Roosevelt also likes to deal with old news friends, whom he hails by their first names. Public men frequently find it necessary to give reporters much background material or other explanations "off the record," and they want to do so to men they can trust. These confidences are sacred to the reporter. The reporter who is discovered violating them must face the wrath of his fellow-workers as well as of his news sources. He may find himself shut off from the news. Bankers, labor leaders, and others often want to give important news to the public without

accepting responsibility for it themselves. They naturally pass it along to reporters they can trust.

This sometimes leads to abuses. Politicians have been known to use the "off the record" method to silence the reporters on details of important news. It is not infrequent for reporters to inform an important man that they want nothing they cannot print and to warn him that anything he says will be used. Sometimes also important men use reporters to pass along propaganda or to sound out public opinion. The reporter who has been favored many times by such a news source wants to do a favor in return. He may have to in order to maintain the connection. This is a matter largely for the reporter's own conscience. His first loyalty is to his own newspaper.

It may be necessary to employ as many as a dozen or more reporters on one story. It all depends on the number of angles to be covered and their location. Naturally one man cannot be in several places at one time. Let us go back to our theater explosion and assume now that it turned out to be a major disaster, with fifty or sixty persons killed and a hundred or more injured. It would be necessary to have one man to do the lead story, telling of the explosion. Several men would be used to check the number and identification of the dead. Others would be listing the injured in the hospitals. One would doubtless be assigned to a story of the scene. Another to a story of the theater itself, giving something of its history. Then there would be other men interviewing the survivors and getting eyewitness accounts of the explosion and of their escapes. One man would have to cover the police and tell of their efforts to apprehend the criminals responsible. Still another man, working with material from the newspaper's morgue, would get up a story on previous theater disasters. In a couple of hours they would supply from fourteen to twenty columns of type, and the newspaper would go to press with a big display spread over page one, and, including pictures, a page or two inside. Some newspapers might go so far as to attempt to get the name of every person who attended the

show. The Chicago *Tribune* did this very thing in the Iroquois Theater fire. Other newspapers would interview city officials on the precautions against such disasters, the number of exits available, and other safety angles. Still others might use biographies and photographs, where the latter were available, of all the dead.

The co-ordinating of all these stories is the problem of the city editor or the editor in charge. Each reporter cannot tell the lead story over again. There must be one lead story and each collateral story must be kept in its own news groove. One reporter must not step into another's territory. If the story breaks near the office these men may come in to write their stories, but more likely as the edition time is approaching, most of them will telephone in their data to the rewrite men. If the story breaks some distance from the office the star reporter doing the lead will probably be instructed to direct the activities of the others. Some of them will write their stories in a telegraph office, if one is available, and then send them over the wires. Others will dictate their stories to the rewrite men or merely give them the data they have collected. It all depends on the facilities, and the man in charge of the story sees to this before it is too late. Speed is vital as well as accuracy. The edition cannot wait, for it is timed to catch trains. With a story of this kind the editors may try to get to press earlier with it or get out an extra edition. In the latter event they will go to press with the best lead they can provide, and let the details wait for later editions.

On many stories the difficulty of arriving quickly on the scene is the major problem involved. Obviously the reporters first on the ground get the better information, apart from giving their newspaper faster action. The persons concerned in disasters of this sort are voluble at the start, but after they have told their story over a dozen times they tire of the procedure and the late reporter may find himself at a disadvantage. Unless they are working for newspapers that are direct competitors, however,

one reporter is usually ready to share his information with another, for he never knows when he may be in the same predicament himself. In many cases reporters team up to cover a story, each covering different angles, and later exchange information.

An interesting example of a story that required speed in getting on the scene was the crash of the Mollisons on their joint flight across the Atlantic. After crossing the ocean they spent a summer afternoon flying down the Nova Scotian and New England coasts, headed for Floyd Bennett Field in New York. The aviation reporters of the New York newspapers were there waiting for them, but in case they changed their minds reporters were also placed at the other landing fields about the city. At 10:00 P.M. the flash came that the fliers had crashed at Bridgeport, Connecticut, in attempting a landing. *The Times* reporter at Roosevelt Field happened to be talking to the city desk. He had called up seeking the latest information. He was told to take an airplane for the Bridgeport field. The city editor then put in a call for his men at Floyd Bennett Field and told them to do likewise. They did.

The Roosevelt Field man found an airplane all tuned up ready for a flight. He commandeered it and hopped over Long Island Sound. Sixteen minutes after the crash he was talking to the Mollisons, beating the local reporters, who used taxicabs, to the scene. He rushed to a telephone and gave his story to a rewrite man, who made the 10:45 P.M. edition with more than a column of type.

The two Floyd Bennett men arrived within forty minutes. One made for the field to help his colleague and the other for the Bridgeport hospital. The latter actually helped to carry the two injured fliers into the hospital, getting more details from them. The Mollisons were then kept incommunicado for several days, and could not give the details of the story to the rival newspaper to which it had been sold for a high price, whose reporters were late in arriving. *The Times* had columns of it in later editions.

An example of a different kind was the arrival of the *Graf Zeppelin* at Lakehurst on its maiden voyage. One newspaper had the story bought and "sewed up." It had two of its ablest reporters aboard the dirigible. The other newspapers were out in the cold, but they were still trying. The city editor of one newspaper, which had seven men waiting on the scene, made a quick survey of the communication facilities. He found that the telegraph wires were a mile from the mooring mast, but that there were two telephones in the hangar—only two. Hours before the airship arrived he ordered two men to call the office on these telephone wires and then to hold them. Meanwhile tens of thousands of people in thousands of automobiles arrived to see the landing. They swarmed about the great airship. The reporters aboard had their stories written, their assistants on the field were also active, but they could not get through the crowd to the telegraph wires, and their rivals got in column after column of interesting news over the two telephone wires—and beat them on the news by a couple of hours and one full edition.

Probably the best beat of this type was scored by Carr V. Van Anda on the first inauguration of Calvin Coolidge. The moment he received the flash of the death of President Harding in San Francisco, he put in a call for his man covering the Vice-President. Newspapers always cover the Vice-President when the President is ill. Mr. Coolidge was visiting his father on his farm at Plymouth, Vermont. Mr. Van Anda's call got through to the one telephone available. He held it. His reporter told Mr. Coolidge the news, and was one of the few witnesses when his old father swore him into office on the family Bible by lamplight. Mr. Van Anda had a beat for hours on the inauguration of the new President of the United States. It was one of the most colorful stories in a decade—and incidentally started the Coolidge legend of rural simplicity and honesty.

There are many ways of writing a news story and it may take various forms and lengths, but they all really boil down to one: the reporter has a story to tell, and, like anybody else, he tells

it as simply and effectively as he can. As the orator takes his cue from his audience, the reporter takes his from his readers. He tells it the way he thinks it will interest them most. In a serious, conservative newspaper he will probably confine himself to a bare and polite recital of the facts; for a lurid tabloid he may let himself go, giving vivid details, all the blood and thunder, and calling a spade a spade. The importance and interest of the story determine its length. No reporter tries for length with empty words; he supplies more details and background.

Words are the reporter's tools, and the good reporter knows how to use them to advantage. He makes the short, meaningful nouns and verbs do his work, words full of action. He avoids adjectives and adverbs like the plague. They usually involve editorial opinion or characterization. Some editors bar them entirely and all editors use them very sparingly. The reporter is not writing literature. He uses words solely to express the meaning he wants to convey and not to dazzle the reader with a display of erudition. He tries to make each word do its exact job and no more. When he attempts color or pathos he does it with colorful and interesting detail. With more than 500,000 words in the English language, he finds it quite adequate for his purpose and does not invent new ones or give old ones new meanings.

Walter Winchell, with his bizarre expressions and inventions, and the writers of the news magazine *Time*, with their parade of flippant adjectives, have found many admirers and some followers in journalism and doubtless have had a far-reaching influence, especially on the younger generation. Their styles, however, violate all canons of journalism. Admirable as they may be in their own fields they are not suitable to objective news-writing—and that is the aim of the serious newspaper, though it may fall short of its ideal.

Brevity is always the soul of wit so far as the newspaper reporter is concerned. He tells his story once and is through with it. Even in stories that run into many columns the trend is

against leads that tell the whole story, with it told all over again in the thousands of words that follow. Editors prefer the story that opens with a statement of the major facts of the event and then proceeds to tell how, where, when, and why it happened. In the case of major stories that are followed by several collateral stories, the lead story covers the event in its major outline so that the hurried reader may get from it all that he desires to know, and the collateral stories give further detail on other phases that some readers may want. The experience of most editors is that most readers seek every detail on big stories like the Lindbergh kidnapping, a national convention, or a great war, and will overlook or forgive the inevitable repetition. Despite the efforts to avoid duplication, most important stories are told over and over again in the modern newspaper: first in the headlines; sometimes in an "undated lead" or "developments lead"; then in the story itself; and finally in the index to the news. The reporter, however, tells it only once.

There are, of course, many kinds of reporters, but on the whole they are conscientious, competent, and forthright. Trained observers, they write what they see and hear. The high intelligence of American public opinion is their monument. They are criticized at times, usually by persons who have little understanding of the problems that they must overcome as a matter of routine. These same critics would not be so well informed on what is going on in this turbulent world were it not for the accurate report of it in the daily press. Scholars may worry and fuss over these criticisms, the reporter rarely or never; he is already on another assignment and thinking in terms of another story.

V. Editing the News

WHEN the news is gathered and written and approved by the city editor, the foreign editor, the telegraph editor, the sports editor, the society editor, and the financial editor it goes to the copy desk. This is the heart of the newspaper. Here the final newspaper is produced. Here the news is edited for accuracy, clarity, expression, and brevity. Here each story is cut to its proper length, its typography is determined, and headlines are written for it. Here the news takes on the distinctive character of the individual newspaper.

No newspaper is better than its copy desk. A competent copy desk will produce a good newspaper. An incompetent copy desk will produce a poor newspaper, no matter how capable its reporters and its correspondents. The copy desk is the guardian of the news and has the final responsibility for the way it appears in the newspaper. An executive editor may change a story in proof, or require that it be done over, but on the whole the news goes into the newspaper the way it leaves the copyreaders.

There are always more capable reporters than the demand for them, but there is a perpetual shortage of capable copyreaders. No good copyreader is ever out of a job for long.

The dashing reporter, whose by-line appears on the page-one story, gets the public acclaim, and often all the credit within his own office; rare indeed is it that the copyreader who edited the story gets any credit, although his contribution to it may be equally valuable. The copyreader, by eliminating needless verbiage, inserting a better word here or there, giving a new turn

to the trite phrase, clarifying an ambiguity, and correcting a name or a known fact, may have lifted that story out of mediocrity and made it the interesting and dramatic story that it is. What is more, it may well have been his pointed and graphic headlines that called the reader's attention to it. The copyreader completes the work of the reporter, contributing his own experience and knowledge and judgment. He makes the news fit to print.

Copyreading is both an art and a science. It is both critical and creative. The copyreader must have a fine feeling for the drama and the color of the news and a sense of public responsibility. He must have a wide background and experience against which to measure the significance of the news so that he may emphasize the important, eliminate the trivial, and provide adequate coverage. He must know the exact meanings of words, not approximations, so that he can make each word do its proper job and select the right word to bring the reader the meaning intended. He must have a thorough understanding of newspaper mechanics and requirements, including his newspaper's type style and dress. He must know how to mark his copy for the compositor. He must also have a working mastery of the art of headline writing—one of the most difficult and delicate of all the arts, if the least glorified. The executive editor never feels safe unless he has behind him a desk manned by competent copyreaders. They can save him many an embarrassment, as they do the reporter. He would rather acquire another able copyreader any day than another brilliant reporter.

It is the inexorable law in all carefully edited newspapers that all copy, no matter how experienced the writer, must be read and edited by a second man, usually a copyreader, before it goes into type. The story or editorial may be perfectly clear to the writer, indeed it probably is, for he knows what he is trying to say; but his meaning may not be clear to the reader. After all, the sole reason for printing the story is to inform the reader. Then no writer, not even the best, writes "clean" copy. Minor

errors of fact, of spelling, of expression—slips, if you will—are bound to appear. They must be corrected, for even a small mistake helps to destroy the impression of authenticity that the writer wants to convey. Much newspaper copy is written under pressure, and most of it is written only once. It must be done right the first time. Newspapers want men and women who can do an adequate job on the first attempt—that is, a job that will be adequate after the copyreader has worked on it.

The copyreader may have to turn it upside down, giving it a new lead. He may have to change the sequence of its facts or of its paragraphs. He may have to place the emphasis on some angle that has been buried in a mass of verbiage. He may have to insert background to bring out the significance of the story. He may have to cut it in half, retaining the essentials of the story. He may require further facts or more complete coverage of some phase of it. He may have to eliminate libel.

It is seldom that the competent copyreader asks to have the story rewritten, because he, himself, can do a fast and good job with his pencil, scissors, and paste pot. He must work fast, for he must make his edition. No one is more conscious of the clock than he. On the occasions when a story does miss an edition, or makes a sloppy or inaccurate debut, it is he and not the reporter who usually takes the rebuke. It is now his story.

Yet the average reporter considers the copyreader his own special enemy and rarely has a kind word for him. Listen to the reporter and you get the impression that the copy desk is incompetent, manned by fossils in varying degrees of senility with a grudge against all brilliant writing or thwarted youths wholly lacking in experience and nursing an inferiority complex that makes them do strange things. Study him a bit and you will find that he is the one with the grudge. His pet story has been spoiled because the word he chose to express an idea was changed, doubtless for a better one. His lead was rewritten, probably because he missed the significance of the story he was reporting. His colorful anecdote was eliminated, because there

was no space for it or because it was in questionable taste. His copy was cut a quarter, a third, or a half, because the paper was "tight" and otherwise it would never see the light of day. The reporter has pride in his work and he was particularly proud of that pretty sentence that the copyreader found superfluous. Reporters are that way, while copyreaders deal in realities, the realities of practical journalism. Editors demand brevity, clarity, accuracy, and the copyreaders give it to them.

The reporter gets most of the thrills and the glamour in newspaper work, while the copyreader gets most of the drudgery. The reporter gets the Pulitzer prize for the best story of the year, while it has not occurred even to a school of journalism to make awards for copyreading, probably because the copyreader's work does not carry his by-line and is not so obvious. Although the reporter takes all the prize money and all the bows, there was never a prize story that did not have its copyreader, and in some instances his share in it was not trivial.

An incident in New York a few years ago illustrates this. One of the leading newspapers sent a reporter, one of its best, to cover the trial of some Communists in the Midwest. This reporter got the idea somewhere that his principal duty was to slam the Communists, to belittle their case, and to ballyhoo the prosecutors. He did so. The copyreader in the office had other ideas. He wrote new leads for the daily stories, cut out all the prejudice, and gave both sides a fair deal, and no more. When the trial was over, the lawyers for the Communists wrote to the publisher praising the reporter's work, and especially his fair treatment. The Communist party sent words of praise also. A society of newspaper editors added its endorsement. The publisher felt very happy about it. He wrote a letter to the reporter commending his work and enclosing a substantial check. A school of journalism had the reporter address its young hopefuls on the principles and practice of objective reporting. There was much ado about it. The reporter accepted all this acclaim with becoming modesty. No one ever thought of the copyreader.

But the copyreader, too, has his thrills. His work also is interesting. In fact it is hard to find a position on a live newspaper that is not interesting. The copyreader will follow and help to direct the exposure of the local grafter. He will take all the copy on a story like the war in Finland, select the most interesting angle for his lead, and weave specials and Associated Press and United Press reports into a fabric that gives a graphic picture of the news of the day. He has been tracing the Russian attack on his maps and getting up his own map daily to clarify the campaign. Or he may be following the unfolding of the New Deal with its mixture of reform and recovery measures and wondering if St. George Roosevelt will finally vanquish Dragon Depression. He can thrill to the beauty in form and expression of the headlines he writes. He can have his pride in a job intelligently done. He can look forward to promotion and eminence, for the high executives of newspapers are mostly drawn from his ranks.

The copyreader works under the direct supervision of a superior editor, to whom he is responsible, and on the larger metropolitan newspapers he is a member of the staff of a news desk. Each newspaper has its own organization in the matter of copy desks, and they vary greatly. They generally, however, come under one of two classifications: the universal desk, which works under a chief copyreader and edits all or nearly all the copy in the office, and the specialized desk—there may be five or six in the one office—which works under the direction of the editor personally responsible for the kind of news edited on it. Each kind of desk has its own technique. The *New York Herald Tribune* uses the universal desk, while *The New York Times* uses specialized desks. Editors differ on their respective merits.

The universal desk is more economical, for it can make more use of each man on it and thus can operate with fewer men—and fewer pay checks. It requires only one head copyreader. Copy for it is worked over in advance. The editors directing the gathering and writing of the news sit apart from it, often with

an assistant or two, and go through the news very carefully, selecting what they want to use and deciding how. They mark the stories for length and for type of head before sending the copy to the desk. If much editing happens to be needed they may find it advisable to have the whole story rewritten. In many stories they may not leave the copyreader much to do apart from writing the headlines. The ablest copyreaders get the best stories to handle, regardless of whether they originate in Berlin, Washington, or Times Square.

The specialized desk requires greater specialization and concentration on the news by the copyreader. Giving him more responsibility, it demands better talent. Here the foreign editor will sit at his desk with his copyreaders and assign a major story to each. One will edit the news of the war in China, following it from its first "incident" to its ultimate conclusion. Another will handle Latin American news and follow the policies of President Cárdenas through to the end. Each will have his specialty, and he must have the knowledge and the experience to do the job well. He will have to digest the news of the day in his own field, consult the foreign editor, or take instructions on how to display it, and then go ahead to provide proper coverage of it. He will have to fill in the skeletonized story from the foreign correspondent, and add what Associated Press, local, Washington, or other features, may be needed. The specialized copyreader is often an expert, and if not he soon becomes one, for he is expected to keep informed on the news he must handle. The same is true, but in lesser degree, of the other desks.

The New York Times uses six news desks: the foreign desk, which deals with the news of the outside world; the telegraph desk, which deals with the domestic news of the United States, excepting the metropolitan district; the city desk, which deals with the news of New York City, New Jersey, Long Island, and Westchester and Putnam Counties; the "obit" (obituary) desk, which deals with biographical sketches of individuals on

their death, and news of music, the theater, motion pictures, society, and women's clubs; the financial desk, which deals with all news for the financial pages regardless of its origin; and the sports desk, which deals with all the news of all sports. Each desk has its own responsible head with an assistant to replace him when that is necessary. The foreign and telegraph editors sit in charge of their own desks and work directly with the copyreaders. The city, financial, sports, and society editors sit apart and chief copyreaders run their desks. *The Times* employs sixty-four copyreaders.

Whatever the system, the copyreader must bring great personal qualifications to his task. His best background is wide reading in literature, history, science, and political economy. He must know above all things the history of his own time, which after all is but the current news. For that reason he must be a thorough reader of the daily newspapers. He must know the persons who make news, with something of their character. He must know the functioning of governments. He must recognize the moral and economic trends that sweep humanity and motivate the news. There is scarcely any kind of information that he will not sooner or later find valuable. He must know the English language, for that is his medium of expression. He must be familiar with the process of turning out a newspaper. He must be something of a skeptic; and he must certainly have a good supply of plain horse sense.

It is no more possible to teach copyreading here than it would be to teach the sculpturing of a statue or the composing of a symphony. Every piece of news copy that reaches the copyreader is different and requires different treatment. It must be a finished story when he is through with it, and that is all. Many of his problems are intangibles and can only be discussed in generalities. The way to learn copyreading is by copyreading, and the best schools of journalism, recognizing this, have their copy desks under the control of practical editors. The large newspapers employ only experienced copyreaders. The newspa-

pers in the smaller cities teach their copyreaders by trial and error, and often when they acquire competence lose these men to the metropolitan press.

There are, however, certain things that the good copyreader does as a matter of routine. He checks the reasonableness of every statement in a story against his own common sense. He checks every fact in it against his own knowledge of the situation and against reference books. He watches every story for evidence of bias or unfairness, especially if the reporter or correspondent or news service has hitherto shown a disposition to favor one side or the other. He makes sure that every sentence is as clear and simple as it can be made and still tell the news. He removes every word and every quotation and every incident that do not carry needed information to the reader. He corrects all mistakes of word usage, punctuation, and spelling. He removes or changes all hackneyed expressions. He knows that he is not dealing with literature, whatever the reporter may think, and so tells his story as lucidly and quickly as possible, and then is through with it. He makes certain that the story is clean and fit to go into the home for women and children to read. When in doubt he eliminates the matter from the story. Few stories are worth the risk of a libel action. Competent copyreaders rarely have one, and when they do usually win it.

The copyreader's work at its best is constructive. It falls short of what it should be when it does not add something of value to the story. It should change the story as little as possible, apart from making it meet the newspaper's requirements in space and character. When otherwise changed it should be a definite improvement in form or expression.

There are, of course, copyreaders with a mania for changing copy. With pencil and scissors they perform a major operation on every piece of copy, whether it is needed or not. They change one word for another that is perhaps less expressive, merely for the sake of changing it. They switch paragraphs around and reorder the sequence of facts. They emphasize some other angle

for a new lead. The best copyreaders, however, retain where possible the reporter's words and sequence of facts. They try to hold the color and flavor he gave the story, which should be the color and flavor of the event. After all the reporter was on the scene, he spoke to the persons concerned, he should know best what it is all about. If he has done his job even moderately well it is better to stay close to his story. If he has overwritten his story, which is quite common, it will be necessary for the copyreader to "cut it hard," but even then the sound copyreader will keep the expression of the reporter. There should be a definite and adequate reason for every change in the copy.

All newspapers have their own individual style and dress for news. Most of the important newspapers have a style book, giving spellings of disputed words, places, and person's names, typographical dress, and instructions on a hundred and one things that may arise in the writing and editing of the copy. Each copyreader has a style book available, which he consults and follows in his work. So also have the newspaper's compositors and proofreaders. The latter usually have instructions to make the type conform to the newspaper's style even if the copyreader has not made the copy do so. When variations from the accepted style become necessary, the copyreader marks his copy in brackets, "follow copy."

The copyreader to work effectively should also have an assortment of up-to-date reference books available. These should certainly include the *World Almanac*; *Whitaker's Almanack*; the city directory; the telephone book; the social register; all the various *Who's Who's*, such as the American, the Canadian, the British, the French, the German, and the Chinese, and those on music, the theater, etc.; the *Congressional Directory*; the *Statesman's Year-Book*; the *Legislative Manual*; New York City's *Green Book*; *Burke's Peerage*; *Debrett's Peerage*; the *Almanach de Gotha*; *Lloyd's Register of Shipping*; the *Army Register*, the *Naval Register*, the *American Labor Year Book*; *Europa*; *Jane's Fighting Ships*; *Jane's Aircraft*;

Moody's and Poor's books on corporations, including the *Directory of Directors*; and several dictionaries, encyclopedias, and gazetteers. He should also have street maps of his city and the latest maps of the world. He should look up what he does not know. He should leave nothing to chance, else he will frequently be wrong. Avoidable errors are unpardonable.

What is more the copyreader should make full use of the newspaper's morgue. Every newspaper worthy of the name maintains a morgue, where millions of clippings from its own columns and other newspapers are kept on file for ready reference. These clippings and other information are placed in envelopes and indexed. There will be an envelope, or several of them, for each of the thousands of persons, institutions, and countries that have figured in the news in the last half-century or more, and there will also be envelopes on all important problems that have affected humanity in that time. These dossiers will contain confidential and other information gathered by the newspaper's staff but not printed for some reason. The information is kept as complete as possible. If a man is indicted, for instance, his dossier will show what disposition was made of the indictment. When it is necessary for the newspaper to print a correction on an earlier story, that clipping is marked so that it cannot be overlooked. Many newspapers also maintain good working libraries under the direction of trained librarians. The reporter will consult his morgue, and if necessary his library, for background before writing his story. The copyreader may find it necessary to check back on the facts or to consult the morgue to see what had previously been printed on the subject. The copyreader must dispel all doubts before finally passing the copy.

The copyreader must have a good memory, a valuable asset to all newspaper men. He must remember what has been printed on a given subject so that he may feature the new angle of it. He must remember the exact spelling of the names of the personalities figuring in the news, and especially their

middle initials. Nothing so infuriates a person as the misspelling of his name in type. It is not always easy to remember whether a name begins with a "Mc" or a "Mac" or whether it is followed with a capital letter or not. Many persons have individual, sometimes freakish, spellings of their names. That is their privilege; and the copyreader must spell them correctly. The late Elisabeth Marbury insisted on spelling her name with an "s" and would protest to editors whenever the type did not conform to her wishes, which was almost all the time. The copyreader must also remember the correct spelling of place names. He must have the "h" on Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and omit it on Pittsburg, Kansas. He must make it St. Johns, Quebec, Saint John, New Brunswick, and St. John's, Newfoundland. And so on ad infinitum. He must remember whether a bill goes up or down to the governor in Albany. He must know the time variations in all places in the world. He must know that Persia has become Iran and Constantinople has become Istanbul. He must remember all the important dates in history. He must have all quotations from the classics correct. He must litter up his memory with a tremendous mass of accurate detail which apart from "Information Please" on the radio is not of much use for anything but copyreading.

Yet nothing so destroys the authenticity of a story, for the reader, as mistakes in details of this kind. The story that presumes to tell him something, especially if he has firsthand information of it, must be correct to the last detail if he is to accept it as accurate. This is particularly true of expert analysis of political and economic problems. When the reader finds that the name of a person or a place is wrong, that some incident is inaccurately placed, or that some date or fact is incorrect, doubt is cast on the whole story even when the major information it conveys is correct.

The capable copyreader also eliminates the trite expression, many of which slip into the writing of even first-rank reporters. He does not let the ship "limp into port"; the prisoner be

"lodged in jail"; the victim give a "sigh of relief"; and the leading citizen die "after a lingering disease." He eliminates the "bated breath," the "deafening roar," the "inclement weather," the "long-distance telephone," the "hasty retreat," the "sadder but wiser," the "pandemonium," the "general public," and hundreds of other timeworn expressions. He makes the simple, expressive, everyday nouns and verbs do the work. He questions every adjective and adverb that he allows to remain.

The copyreader must mark his copy so that the composing room will understand his instructions. This is simple enough when he can dispose of the story in a unit and send the copy and the headlines to the compositors together. This, however, is not always possible. It may be necessary to send the copy to the composing room in sections consisting of a paragraph or a page at a time—known as "takes"—to speed it along for the approaching edition, with the headlines to follow. Or new developments in the story may make necessary a new lead, inserts, or "adds" to the copy, with corresponding changes in the headlines. Moreover, a major story may have a half-dozen or more collateral stories that must be grouped with it in the newspaper. All these must be easily identifiable by make-up editors and compositors.

Each newspaper has its own way of dealing with copy, although they all follow a general pattern. On most metropolitan newspapers every story carries an identifying "slug," usually a word or two that labels what it is and indicates how it should be placed in the newspaper. This slug is carried on the type proofs along with the composing room's own identification—the latter usually combinations of letters and numbers.

For instance, all news pertaining to Germany will carry some such slug as "Reich," "Germany," "Hitler," or "Nazis." The foreign editor will decide on one, and probably maintain it from day to day right through the year. Let us suppose he picks "Reich" and that he is dealing with the annexation of Czechoslovakia. He will then slug his lead story "Reich-Annex," and

he will probably have such subordinate or collateral stories as "Reich-Berlin," "Reich-Troops," "Reich-Text," "Reich-Prague," "Reich-Slovakia," "Reich-London," "Reich-Paris," "Reich-Rome," "Reich-Wash" (the "Wash" an abbreviation for Washington), and "Reich-Local." Or he may slug his stories by correspondent. In any event each story is definitely and clearly identifiable. Compositors can assemble each in the composing room; and make-up editors can place each in its proper place in the page forms. The dummy layouts of various pages carry the slugs of the stories that are to be placed in them. It makes for quick and accurate work. Then when it becomes necessary to make a change in one of these stories the insert, the add, the new lead, or what-not, goes to the composing room so slugged, numbered if there be more than one change, and also carrying the individual slug of the story. It is usually accompanied by a marked proof. With good copyreading it is seldom that there is any confusion, even in the largest metropolitan newspapers. Each story flows into its proper place in the newspaper, and each change in it arrives at its proper destination.

The copyreader must also have a feeling for type space. If the story he is editing is to be a half-column it must be that and not three-quarters of a column. If it is to be a quarter-column, one column, two, three, four, five, or more, it must be that and not something else. A newspaper's space is its greatest asset and it is highly prized. There is always interesting news clamoring for admission to its columns; and nothing eats up space more than loose copyediting. The capable copyreader "boils" the copy down to its exact news value; the space he finally allows it must be packed with information.

Finally the copyreader must maintain the standards of his newspaper—both news and ethical standards. Although he has superiors, sometimes too many of them, on most stories he has the final responsibility for his copy. When he is in doubt he can and does refer his problems to his superior editors, or he may question the writer, but when he is through with a story

it must measure up to the newspaper's requirements in news coverage, good taste, and public responsibility. He must be steeped in the traditions of his newspaper and have a sure feeling for the sensibilities of his readers.

The competent copyreader reads his copy once, editing and cutting it as he does so. He may glance at its original length so that he may know how much cutting it needs, but that is all. He reads it word by word, challenging each, sentence by sentence, paragraph by paragraph, making certain of each before he accepts it and passes on. He may have to tone the story down because of a partisan slant. He watches for loose ends. He follows the unfolding of the story and makes certain that it registers in his mind the information that it is intended to convey. Careful copyreading of loose reporting will reduce it by as much as 25 per cent and it will be the better for it. There are, of course, masterly reporters—a few—who write compact copy that requires little or no editing.

The copyreader can and does make his mistakes. After all he is fallible like the rest of mankind. More often he lets the reporter's errors slip into the newspaper. Whichever it may be, it is a sad affair for the copyreader, for he soon hears from his superior editors, and his readers. He seldom makes the same mistake twice.

With the copy edited, the copyreader must write headlines for it; and this requires expert craftsmanship. Good headline writers are rare even among competent copyreaders. The newspaper that can boast of three or four is fortunate. It is a gift from the gods.

Modern headline writing is a journalistic development that has been brought to perfection only on American newspapers, although some Canadian newspapers do well also. Up to the Spanish-American War headlines were not much more than labels that told little. A leading New York newspaper, for instance, presented the news of the assassination of President Lincoln to its readers with the one-column headline, "A Tragic

Event." Even the great London newspapers of today fall short in this respect, competent as they are in many others. It is worth noting in passing that the English newspapers that have obtained the largest circulations are the ones that most nearly approach American methods. There have been many trends in headlines among American newspapers, each individual newspaper adopting a system and a dress that suit its policies and interest its readers. Of late years the trend is more and more to conservative typographical display, with the large-type and full-page outbursts reserved for cataclysmic news. The success of the news magazine *Time*, with its simple, subject classifications, has helped this trend.

The American newspaper headline serves three purposes:

1. It commands the reader's attention.
2. It tells the story.
3. It dresses the news page.

The average American has become a headline reader. Headlines often give him all the information that he wants or can read in his hurried progress through life. They give him a sample of the stories under them. If he is sufficiently interested he will take time to read a story to the end; if not, he will pass on to the next headline, and on and on until he finds the story that he will read. Thus he may glance over the headlines in a sixty-page newspaper, and get a fair idea of the general news of the day, while he may read only three or four stories. No large American newspaper is produced today with the idea that its readers will read it through. Rather the idea is that the information is there for those who want it; and each reader will select what interests him. One man may have only a casual interest in foreign affairs and financial news, but may be absorbingly interested in sports. Another may have a casual interest in sports or political news, but may be an ardent student of the theater. It would be a full-time occupation to read all the reading matter in a modern metropolitan newspaper. *The New*

York Times made the test with an average woman reader. It took her twenty-nine hours.

With their strict space limitations, headlines are naturally restricted in what they can tell. Editors forever emphasize that headline type is made of metal and not of rubber. Well-written headlines must tell the story accurately and fairly completely. They must catch the spirit of the story; it would not do to have facetious headlines on a serious story. They must do equal justice to all sides concerned in the story. They must have punch, color, drama, and interest. They must have clarity. They must state positive facts; some newspapers entirely bar negative headlines. The reporter may write around his subject and make what qualifications he feels are necessary; the headline writer working in a more limited medium has a much more difficult problem. Many libel actions are based on headlines. And finally headlines must have typographical symmetry and beauty. They must conform to space requirements to the letter.

The newspapers of the United States present a great variety of headline type displays and arrangements. Some of these are comparatively simple; others are elaborate in the extreme. On most newspapers it is possible to switch quickly from one kind of headline to another, as the type count is so arranged that the combinations of letters that made the one headline will flow into the other. This simplifies make-over from one edition to another or a change of display for a story. The copyreader must have a sound knowledge of the headline possibilities and limitations of his newspaper. He must know what he can say in the type that his particular headline provides. He must maintain journalistic propriety. On a yellow newspaper the headlines are yellow and emphasize the sensational; on a conservative newspaper they are conservative and confine themselves to the exact facts. An intelligent copyreader quickly masters the idiosyncrasies of his newspaper.

Well-written headlines read smoothly in simple grammatical language. They flow freely from one fact to another. They

avoid stilted expressions and obscure constructions. The latter are generally caused by the effort to crowd too much into the limited space. They must start off with the keynote, or major news feature, of the story. They must quickly identify the subject and the place of the action, if possible in the first three or four words, and preferably in the top line. They must then go on to clarify and amplify the event until they give an adequate picture of what happened, adequate, considering the space available. One section or bank of the head should lead logically to the other with a smooth sequence of facts. The completed headlines, however big or small, must fit exactly into the space allotted to them.

Few headlines carry more than forty words, and each of these words must be charged with meaning. Insignificant stories of course carry small headlines, while important news events have more elaborate treatment and so have headlines that allow more to be told. It is remarkable what can be expressed in forty words. It is worth trying some time. Ask the witness of a catastrophe what he saw. Ask the returning European traveler what he thinks of the foreign situation. Ask the Senator for an appraisal of the political situation. In each case you will probably get your reply within forty words, which if the necessity should arise could probably be converted into headlines for each of these subjects. The copyreader when in doubt asks himself what the story is: his answer is his headline. A good headline is a thumbnail sketch of the news story.

Most headlines are written in the historical present, generally in the present indicative, active, because this is the most direct and forcible form of expression. They go at the story directly, without waste of time or words. They never back into it; circumlocutions are unknown. Every sentence, every expression contains a verb, either expressed or implied, for only thus can it give a sense of action.

Every capable headline writer has a large vocabulary of short, expressive, forceful verbs. Often some of these, like "hit,"

"flay," "rap," "bar," "map," "ban," "urge," "ask," "quit," "stir," and "hold," are abused. The distraught copyreader may be pardoned if with space available for only four letters he uses "hits" when he should properly have used "denounces" or "condemns," if he uses "bars" when "prohibits" is the right word. He must get the news into the space available, and in so doing may have to overwork the short verb. In fact this is the major criticism of modern headlines, a criticism in which most news editors will concur. In practice they use such words only when they have to do so, but unfortunately that is too often.

The competent headline writer tries to avoid using the same word twice in a head, and he never uses it in a different sense. When possible he uses a synonym, and this on occasion has led to the use of such monstrosities as Bay State and Nutmeg State, when he did not want to repeat Massachusetts or Connecticut or could not crowd them into the limited space. The news editor by the same token tries to avoid the repetition of the same words in several headlines on the same page. He does not want a procession of "maps" or "plans" across the top of the page, nor does he want "Roosevelt" in every other headline. He will vary the headlines by using other verbs or by referring to Mr. Roosevelt as the "President" or "chief executive" or by leaving the identification out of the top of the headlines. This is not possible in some news classifications where all action is similar, as for instance on the obituary page where twenty or more good citizens have "died" during the preceding twenty-four hours. The same problem exists in sports headlines, and the ingenuity of sports copyreaders in this respect has often evoked the wonder of other news editors. An interesting parlor game could be based on a counting of the various ways sports editors say that a football team has been victorious or defeated in one Sunday edition at the height of the fall season.

The capable copyreader also strives to avoid abbreviations, unless their significance is readily recognizable by the reader. For years most newspapers barred all abbreviations excepting

Y.M.C.A., Y.W.C.A., D.A.R., and a few others equally well known, but the advent of the New Deal with its epidemic of alphabetical boards and commissions changed this. Now the average edition of a newspaper is full of such abbreviations as RFC, SEC, WPA, AAA, etc., both in headlines and stories.

All news editors attempt to avoid the splitting of the verb in the top lines of the headlines. They abominate such constructions as "Roosevelt Will" with the second or third lines completing the action. They also object to having such a line finish with a preposition. In the following banks of the head the standards are not so exacting, although efforts are made to avoid breaking words, even when this can be done properly with a hyphen. Such things destroy the balance of the headlines and make hard reading. They usually result from speedy or sloppy work and are almost always corrected between editions.

News editors also want the headlines done in plain, simple, everyday words that are understood by their readers. They are not impressed, and neither are the readers, by the erudition of the copyreader. Nor do they welcome the new words that come into vogue for a time—such words as "allergic," "tendentious," "tergiversation," "detente." They get into the copy and are sometimes passed there, especially if the context makes their meaning obvious or if they are the proper words to convey the writer's meaning, but the copyreader does not use them in headlines. People do not carry dictionaries in subways.

The problem of getting much information into little space results frequently in the dropping of words from sentences in headlines. The "the's" and the "a's" and the "an's" seldom appear and sometimes a comma takes the place of an "and." Such words are lacking in force and are not missed. His conscience must be the copyreader's guide in such matters; but he must make certain that his meaning is clear and that his headlines read smoothly and gracefully. Awkward expressions can ruin any headline, no matter how perfect it may otherwise be.

Following is a sample head, chosen not because of its bril-

liance or technical perfection but because it illustrates some of the principles outlined in the preceding paragraphs.

JAPANESE PLANES BOMB WEST CHINA

Third of Nanchwan, 50 Miles
Southeast of Chungking, Is
Destroyed by Raiders

3 OTHER CITIES ATTACKED

Chinese Threaten to Recapture
Yochow on Yangtze in
Their Pursuit of Foe

It will be noted at once that it identifies the subject matter of the news story in the first words and goes on to tell the story. It tells the news story so adequately, in fact, that unless the reader is especially interested in the war in China he need not read the story. It provides enough data for the casual reader. There is a verb in every sentence, and every word is readily understandable. The scene and the time are obvious. The facts it tells are interesting and precise. It is symmetrical. Every line of it fits into its space without crowding. There are no split verbs and no broken words. It flows freely from the first word to the last. One fact leads logically to the next. Every bank steps off gracefully. It seems simple and easy to write, but the simplicity and ease are the product of a high art. For only an expert can write it that way.

The symmetry of such headlines is obtained only by a count of the letters in each line. Most letters have different widths in type, and a few exact copyreaders count their lines on such space values, but for general purposes most copyreaders treat all capital letters alike, excepting for the "m's" and "w's" which are a

unit and a half each and the "i's" which are half-units. They also count the spaces between words as half-units. The experienced copyreader, moreover, has a sixth sense for the space demands of words. He knows the combinations that will fit, whether it be a one-, a two-, a three-, or an eight-column head. He can write one as easily and as quickly as the other. He will always count his top lines, for if they "break" they will upset his whole head and embarrass his make-up editor, who may have only seconds to "fix" it in the composing room before it goes into the edition. The following banks he may write without counting, taking care to place the longer words and figures so they cannot come at the end of lines and "break" or require hyphens. He can write the most difficult headlines in a few minutes and should his editors change their minds can do a different kind of head in even less time.

The competent copyreader writes his headlines without referring to copy, to proofs, or to notes. The man who must refer back to his story does not know it, and so has not grasped it thoroughly in the editing. The chances are that that man has not done a good job on the reading of the copy and will do an equally poor job on the head. The copyreader who did grasp his story will have little trouble with the head, and it will tell the story better. Proofs and copy are not always available. The editor in charge of that classification of the news should know each story well enough to be able to revise headlines or do them himself without having to refer to the copy or proofs.

The most difficult headlines to write are those for major events that are covered in a dozen or more collateral stories. Let us go back to Hitler's annexation of Czechoslovakia. We noted the fact that there were many subdivisions of that story. There was the lead story which told the major facts and other stories which dealt with other angles of the main story or the repercussions from it in the capitals of the world. Five or six copyreaders working under the direction of the foreign editor would edit various phases of such an event. Yet one man must

do the major, page-one headlines, which may be anything from four columns to eight. That man must grasp the whole story. He must tell what Hitler is doing, and how, and give the resulting reaction to it. He must take a wide view of the whole affair. He must be objective regardless of his personal feelings. He must hold the balance fairly and give a true picture of the news. He may have to get it into ten to fifteen words. He will deal with the main issues, the large issues, and leave the details for subordinate headlines. This kind of head is usually done by one of the superior editors, in this case either the foreign editor or one of the assistant managing editors. He must know every angle of the day's news of this event, and he must be able to place it in its proper historical or journalistic perspective. After all, it is one move in Hitler's program.

After the copyreader and his immediate superior editor have finished with the story it is ready for the composing room, but on most metropolitan newspapers it will first make a brief stop at the copy-control desk. Here an editor will look it over and make a record of its probable space length before speeding it on its way. This is the copy-control editor. He has before him the space figures allowed for each news classification for the edition. (See Chapter II.) He makes an up-to-the-minute check on the space being used by each news editor, and keeps him and the managing editor informed on space conditions. When some news editor is exceeding his allotted space he notifies him of that fact and may proceed to hold out some of his less important stories or to refer them to the managing editor. He may ask that others be cut. He also has before him copies of the dummied pages, such as page one, the front page of each section of the edition, and the financial front, and checks off each story for these pages as it passes through his hands. He can keep the make-up editors posted on the status of page one, and the time each story for it left the news room for the composing room. He also keeps a check on the overset (stories crowded out of the edition) of each edition, of the stories that are going along

for the next edition and the space that must be made available in it if there is not to be another overset.

The copy-control editor's work is exacting and important. He must have sound news judgment and quick decision. He prevents the setting of useless type and thus saves both time and money. He enables news editors to work with something approaching precision. Yet he is probably the most unpopular editor in the office. He steps on too many toes. Then he inevitably makes the mistake of holding out some human interest or other story that he considered trivial but that the managing editor of the rival newspaper considered worthy of page one display. He gets many protests and very little credit for his work.

Finally the news story, now set in type and perhaps proofread to make certain that the type follows the copy, is placed in the page forms by the make-up editors. These editors—there may be from one to eight or more—make up the pages and send them to press. On these editors depends the ultimate appearance of the newspaper. Sloppy make-up and poor classification of the news have ruined more than one otherwise good newspaper.

The make-up editors plan the dress for each page—except those previously dummied—and think out their strategy while the news is being edited in the news room. They make ready for the final hour's drive that closes the edition on the minute. The chief make-up editor consults each of the news editors on what stories to expect. On some newspapers he gets a list of all important stories that each desk will send along. He gets copies of all the news page layouts drawn up by the managing editors, keeping one copy for himself and sending one to the compositor working on the page form. He also gets dummies of all the pages carrying advertising, showing how the advertising will be placed and what news space he will have on each for news. He has the figures allowed for each news classification. He knows of any special arrangements made for an exceptionally long story or group of stories.

With complete data before him he plots out his newspaper. He decides where and how to place the foreign news, the city news, political news, crime, obituaries, society, books, features, pictures, financial, business, shipping, weather, amusements, sports, editorials, etc. True, some of these classifications have regular positions in the newspaper, where the readers will look for them, but he must make certain that that position will allow sufficient space to carry the news of that classification. He plans the dress of the important news pages, making them as attractive and interesting as possible. He has a fairly exact idea in advance of what his newspaper will look like, and he instructs each of his subordinate editors accordingly before they go onto the floor of the composing room.

Different newspapers have different make-up methods, based on the experience of years. On *The New York Times* the chief make-up editor in the composing room usually takes personal charge of page one and the pages to which its stories jump. When one outstanding story dominates the news, or one provides a particularly difficult problem, he may handle that personally. Another editor, usually the first assistant, directs the work on the other news pages in the front of the newspaper. A third handles the second front, amusement, obituary, and society pages, and a fourth the financial, business, shipping, real estate, and minor miscellany pages in the back of the newspaper. An editor, who also watches the news to see that it does not outmode his editorials, makes up the editorial page. A sports editor makes up the sports pages, which are generally dummied in advance and in consultation with the sports editor. An assistant managing editor or two will also be on the floor in the last half-hour to make last minute decisions.

All this seems very complicated, but in practice it is simple. Each make-up editor knows his task. He knows the news he must get into the newspaper. He knows the style of dress. He takes care of broken headlines or refers them to a superior editor. He may have to cut a story to get it into the space

available—it is later referred to the news desk concerned. He places the type in his pages and gets them away in time. The chief make-up editor supervises the whole job. Everything must move expeditiously, for it may be necessary on a large newspaper to send a page a minute to press, and each page must have its quota of news.

Newspaper make-up is also a fine art, requiring special talent and long experience. It is an art that ranks with that of the window dressers of the best Fifth Avenue shops. A capable editor can work miracles with news pages, placing pictures, texts, boxes, various kinds of heads and long and short stories in a harmonious pattern that is attractive to the eye and makes easy reading. Many interesting decisions must also be made. It would be inappropriate for instance to have the church news among the liquor advertisements. It would be equally bad taste to have a wedding among the obituaries or in the midst of the crime news. A thousand things can go wrong at the last minute, and do at one time or another. The unexpected is the expected in all phases of journalism.

The make-up editor must have space available for late, important news. This kind is almost always good news, and must get into the newspaper. Frequently he must make fine decisions on what to put in and what to leave out. Generally he considers his edition; if it is going into the mails, he may favor national news; if it is going on the streets, he may favor the city news. He tries to have the Washington news complete for the edition that goes to the capital. He does likewise for the edition that circulates in Wall Street. He may place subject matter that is barred in the mails, like news of the Irish sweepstakes, into one edition only to take it out of the next. He may spot a story that looks like a libel action; that stays out until there is time to look it over again. He tries to get the reaction story into the same page and beside the story that evokes it. He strives for a complete and adequate newspaper on every edition. And when he gives his O.K. to the final page the newspaper goes to press—and to its readers.

VI. Managing Editor

THE MANAGING editor directs the modern, metropolitan newspaper as a functioning machine. He sets its pace. He fixes its style and dress. He interprets its policy. He steers its course with a true feeling for its character and for the needs of its community. He is personally responsible to its owners—much like the captain of a ship at sea—for the efficient operation of its staff, for its news coverage, and for its sanity and intelligence in a troubled world. In turn his newspaper reflects his brilliance, or lack of it.

In journalistic practice the managing editor may work under various titles, such as executive editor or news editor—on the old New York *Herald* the city editor was the supreme news executive. What is more, his duties and responsibilities may be shared by other editors. With many newspapers publishing seven days a week, with their offices open twenty-four hours a day and their staffs working a forty-hour, five-day week, one newspaper may have a day managing editor, a night managing editor, and one or more assistant managing editors who are in charge of its operations. Vacations and illnesses must be provided for. In some cases owner-publishers—who theoretically confine themselves to the business office—may be their own managing editors, in fact if not in name. For the purpose of this study, however, we will assume that all the news directional authority is centered in one man, and that he is known as the managing editor. One man, of course, must have final authority in every newspaper office, call him what you will, for your newspaper is a miniature dictatorship.

The managing editor, like most other editors, must combine quick decision with fast action. He cannot deliberate for hours, or days, over his problems. He must pass judgment over many intricate news situations daily, and there is no appeal. Most of his decisions of necessity must be almost instantaneous, and they must be right all the time—well, nearly all the time—for a few hours later his newspaper will be read by thousands of persons, many of them unsympathetic, some openly hostile. Even friends of a newspaper enjoy discovering the editor in a mistake and writing, telephoning, or telegraphing to him about it. It is a human reaction. It exalts their egos; but it puts the editor on the spot. He cannot afford to be wrong often; for his newspaper cannot be consistently wrong and live. He must get the news early and complete, and be right the first time.

The competent managing editor has a viewpoint that embraces the world and all its activities. Like Jupiter on Olympus he follows the doings of men, noting their follies and foibles as well as their squabbles and triumphs. He is a spectator of life who enjoys the show that is being presented but rarely struts across the stage himself or interferes with its "business." He must maintain personal detachment; but we are living in stirring times and the world presents a thrilling spectacle for those who will take the time and the trouble to look at it. Incidentally it makes plenty of news.

Let us take a glance at this world-drama as viewed from the managing editor's desk.

First of all we notice great currents of thought, as positive and relentless as the Gulf Stream or the Arctic Current, sweeping through the minds of men. We see peoples grouping under ideological banners and slogans, some rallying to Communism here, some to Fascism there, and others still holding forth for liberal democracy. There is evidence of uncertainty and strife everywhere, with nation moving against nation, race against race, and class against class. All civilization is in a state of flux. Human greed and national greed are on the march. The aver-

age man is dissatisfied with his rôle; he wants more out of life.

A dictator, all-powerful and autocratic, purges his enemies in Russia, or invades Finland, and with the help of his secret police and censors tries to obscure our vision. Another dictator, equally overbearing, persecutes an ancient and long-suffering race in Germany, and with the help of an abject officialdom, propaganda, and censorship also tries to blind us to the truth. We can see their peoples, and, from our vantage point, the lot of one is not much better than, and not much different from the other—men are so many pawns in the hands of their masters. We see armies lined up on fortified European frontiers, war on the seas and war in the air. We see the same conflict repeated in the Far East, with airplanes dropping tons of explosives on the ancient and honorable civilization that was China and decimating a peaceful people. Treaties are ignored and broken. War is forced on peace-loving nations. Frontiers are shifted and old territories given new names, sowing the seeds of future conflict that will shift these same frontiers again. We count two score nations where freedom of thought, freedom of speech, and freedom of the press are denied to the people, and the truth is hidden in the murky fog of propaganda and censorship and a controlled press.

Looking again, we observe teeming millions working on farms and in factories; children in schools and students in colleges, the coming generation; scientists in laboratories seeking a cure for cancer or exploring the interior of the atom; brave men attempting to scale Mount Everest or to trace some tributary of the Amazon to its headwaters; philosophers, poets, artists, and musicians striving to enlarge the scope of the mind; and a thousand other activities that give us new hope and make us realize that man is moving onward and upward.

Coming nearer home, we find our picture clearer, for men can speak their minds and demand what they want. Congress is grappling with the problems of a free people. A dozen legislatures are dealing with the interests of as many states. Men take

their difficulties to the courts with some assurance of legal redress. Here also we see strife. Dissatisfied workers are on strike. Factories are closed for lack of buying power by consumers. Monopolies control the natural resources of the nation. Millions of people are on relief. Millions more are grumbling. But many more millions are occupied with the affairs of the day, doing their work, going to the movies, listening to the radio, driving their automobiles, and making the most of life. Gangsters, murderers, and other criminals intrude, but they play a minor rôle. Life is still hard here in America; but it is easier than it was fifty years ago; and we feel confident it will be easier still fifty years hence.

This vast panorama does not stand still for one instant. It is constantly shifting; some of the changes are of little significance, others of major importance. This shifting makes the news; and it is with this that our managing editor is concerned. His reporters and correspondents are placed to observe and report every phase of it. He moves them about with the changing scene to have them present when the big event occurs. In any unexpected change he speeds men to the spot. Not only does he provide adequate coverage at the great news centers; he tries to anticipate the news in localities where it occurs rarely. He can see events coming. He attempts to read the future.

Civil war breaks out in Spain; he places Spanish-speaking reporters with the rival armies. The young King of Egypt takes a wife; a reporter familiar with Arabic and with Moslem ceremony is one of the spectators. A great telescope is completed on Mount Wilson; a reporter versed in the latest developments in astronomy is there to report if the scientists can see to the outer boundaries of space, as they had hoped. An airplane crashes carrying ten passengers to death; a reporter flies to the scene. A woman's body is found in a Park Avenue apartment; reporters are there soon after the arrival of the police. Staff reporters and correspondents and men from the news services are on the job wherever news is in the making, observing, recording, and

dispatching every phase of it in a steady flow to the managing editor's desk.

Ability to anticipate the news and to have a reporter on the spot when it breaks is the ultimate in journalistic efficiency. Carr V. Van Anda, who directed the news-gathering forces of *The New York Times* for twenty-five years, was a master of this art. His anticipation of the news seemed uncanny, yet it was based on the logic of events.

When the German submarine *Deutschland* docked in Baltimore in 1916 it made a great news story. Interest in it was tremendous. The public eagerly read every scrap of news available on its experiences and plans. This interest rose to fever height when British and French cruisers appeared off the coast to await its departure. As the day for its departure neared all the newspapers and news services had their best men at Baltimore for the inevitable story—all excepting Van Anda.

Van Anda had been giving thought to the situation. He had studied marine maps and traced ocean currents and harbor flows. He figured that the *Deutschland* would move along the shore, safely within American territorial waters, to Norfolk and submerge there for the start of its return trip to Germany. He placed one of his ablest men there.

The *Deutschland* did exactly what Van Anda had figured it would do. His reporter was near by in a fishing boat and got the story. *The Times* scored another beat.

The managing editor and his editors know each of their reporters and correspondents thoroughly from years of personal contact. They know their peculiarities in the treatment of the news, their prejudices, if any, and the way they work. They also know the difficulties each has had to face in the gathering and transmitting of the news. They know the situation out of which each story emerged. They also understand the merits and capabilities of the copyreader, who will edit the story in the office. They realize the space limitations of the edition going to press. They can readily appraise the relative news value of

every story in the whole news budget of the day. They can visualize their newspaper two hours before it appears on the street.

No two newspapers treat the news identically—nor any two editors for that matter. On several of the major stories they may decide on similar display, but on the vast majority of the stories they will react differently, each after his own judgment. Here enters the question of policy. It is almost impossible to touch a news story without giving it some editorial interpretation. The space assigned to it; the headlines it will carry; the page, and the position on the page, it will finally occupy; the way it is written; all involve editorial judgment. News stories do not come like herring, all alike in size, shape, and color; nor are they hurled helter-skelter into news columns. With complete objectivity on the part of every reporter and editor, each story nonetheless represents editorial appraisal. It is one thing to display a story prominently on page one; another to place that story in some obscure column among the advertisements on page 19.

News policy is determined and maintained by the readers of each newspaper, and not, as generally supposed, by advertisers, publishers, or financial interests. Each newspaper, as previously explained, serves its own particular community, its own group of readers, its own segment of public opinion. A newspaper might find it difficult to operate with reduced advertising or without financial backing, but no newspaper could exist a day without readers. Every newspaper must have circulation, and its reading matter is attuned to its own class of readers.

The New York Times, for instance, makes its appeal to the intelligent readers of the country, printing the news in full, giving both sides of all issues, and presenting as fairly and accurately as it can the material on which its readers may form their own opinions. The New York *Herald Tribune* is the leading Republican organ of the United States, and quite naturally it covers Republican news in detail and gives it prominent display.

The New York *World-Telegram* is aimed at liberal opinion, and supplies the news that liberals want to read. The *Daily Worker* is frankly Communist, and prints only what its Communist readers want to find in its columns.

Consider the New York *Daily News*, the exemplar of tabloids. You may not like its kind of journalism, its emphasis on sex and scandal, its "low mental level," but 3,000,000 other readers do, and buy it in preference to any other newspaper. It is edited to give them exactly what they want. Its bright and forceful editorials fight their battles; its news and pictures are presented in a way they can understand; and its comics and features are admirably chosen to give them the kind of entertainment they will appreciate. It is one of the most successful newspapers in the United States, and probably the most profitable in the world. Its executives are the highest paid. It is edited and published to interest its own readers, and not college professors, clergymen, or financial and industrial leaders.

There is, of course, pressure brought on managing editors by publishers and financial interests. Sometimes the publisher is merely the representative of some financial group, but more often he is the majority owner or represents owners conscious of public responsibility. This pressure is more frequent in the smaller cities than in the large metropolitan news centers. When it occurs it soon becomes obvious to the readers, and protests by them and declining circulation quickly bring the editors and the publisher back to the newspaper's proper policy.

It is natural for publishers to attempt back-seat driving, especially if they have not been brought up in the profession, but on most of the outstanding newspapers of the nation, the managing editor and his assisting editors have a comparatively free hand with orders only to produce the best newspaper they can.

The influence of advertisers on the news has been greatly exaggerated. Again, it is more likely to occur in the small city. Agitators like to press this charge, alleging that unfavorable news of department stores and other large advertisers is sup-

pressed or colored. Even a casual examination will refute this allegation.

What news has a department store to give or to suppress? A small fire that is extinguished without injury or much damage is certainly not news; there are a dozen such fires in New York daily. A woman arrested for shoplifting is not news, unless she comes from a prominent family; there are many such cases daily in New York stores. On the other hand, R. H. Macy's annual report, its appointment of a new executive, or the opening of a new store, is certainly news, and should be printed as such; just as would similar news of Anaconda Copper or a hundred other large corporations. In the event of a major disaster, such as a great fire with loss of life and much property damage, it would be witnessed by thousands of people in the shopping district and could not possibly be suppressed. Department stores buy plenty of advertising space to make their own announcements, and do so.

Advertising managers of department stores sometimes ask that "readers" be run with advertisements, but most of them have learned by this time that free "readers" do not get into the best newspapers—the kind of newspapers in which they get the greatest returns for their advertising dollars. Generally they ask for a small item on the birth of a son to some executive, the engagement of a daughter, or the death of an old friend. Nearly all of these items would be acceptable through the regular news channels. They rarely ask for the publication of items of any consequence, and almost never for any sinister purpose.

The managing editor's greatest difficulty in this respect is with pressure groups. They bombard him with their special brand of propaganda and expect him to print it as news, regardless of its news value or interest to his readers. Usually advised by a former newspaperman or press agent, they know many of the tricks of the trade. They dress up their material in attractive forms, may even stage demonstrations or riots to command attention, and use all the influence and pressure available to them to force

their viewpoint into the news columns. When the managing editor refuses to fall for their wiles, or uses a few scant paragraphs to get rid of them, they attack his newspaper on many fronts and do it what injury they can. When their material does qualify as news and is used as such, they denounce his newspaper if he gives an equally fair showing to their opponents. Frequently they are decent people and sincere in their efforts but blinded by partisanship. The managing editor is damned if he treats them kindly and damned if he rebuffs them.

Communist organizations have brought this form of pressure to perfection. In New York, for example, they have staged demonstrations in the streets with the deliberate intention of provoking the police and making news that had to be printed. They carried insulting banners, hurled more insulting epithets, blocked traffic, and expressed defiance of authority. It was one way of calling attention to their existence, and part of their program of violence. Newspaper and newsreel editors always had ample warning to have men and cameras on the spot for the inevitable riot. News editors, knowing their tactics, gave them space reluctantly, but even at that several of their staged riots made page one in all the New York newspapers. Of course, stories of the "brutality" of the American police made good reading in Moscow, while providing new ammunition for a thousand soapboxes.

Then the managing editor has his own herd of "trained seals" and "sacred cows." No newspaper is so low or so high as not to have a few specimens of each. The "trained seals" are those special writers whose copy is so sacrosanct that it must be printed as written, and who have the unhappy faculty of writing for the news columns what should be reserved for the editorial page. They provide many a headache for the managing editor. The "sacred cows" graze in many pastures and produce an abundance of thin, sour milk. They are friends of the management, who, one way or another, get more than an even break in the news. They work much as follows: one of them will do some tall

thinking on some civic problem. He will put those precious thoughts into a speech, statement, or interview. Before delivery, he will telephone the newspaper owner or publisher and impress him with the great significance of the occasion. The publisher or owner will mention the matter—casually—to the managing editor. The result will probably be that two or three more columns of windy words will get into the newspaper, crowding out news of live interest. Managing editors do not like it.

There are two types of managing editors. The first concentrates on the big news, shifting front as the news breaks and covering the big news in a big way. He is the more spectacular. The second devotes his energies to providing "blanket" coverage, producing an even flow of news at all times. He is rarely if ever beaten, certainly not on routine events. Minor events, however, can and do bloom forth into major events. The attempt to assassinate President-elect Roosevelt in Miami shortly after his first election was such an occasion, and one of the most severe tests of journalistic competence in years. A perfunctory ceremony turned in seconds into a tragedy. Few of the reporters covering Mr. Roosevelt were on the spot, and when they did get there no one could give them a coherent account—not even the secret service men. Yet two hours later every newspaper in the nation had an accurate account of it. The *Hindenburg* explosion was another such occasion.

With the news of the day covered, the managing editor's work is only beginning, for he has yet to produce his newspaper. His staff, which he maintains at the highest efficiency he can obtain, carries out the details, and he may check up on its work only from proofs, but every major decision must be made by him. His is the final responsibility. He must be sure-footed in his appraisal of news values. He must provide from the mass of material available an edition to satisfy the requirements of his readers.

It is he who decides how the news space will be allotted to the various departments, and he must do this with a sense of

the importance of each to his public. How much he will allow for sports, how much for financial, how much for society, will ultimately determine how the news is covered in each of these important fields. The same is true with city, foreign, Washington, and other news classifications. Then decisions must be made on important individual stories. There is the matter of texts that need a lot of space. The United States Supreme Court may have made a major finding that day, perhaps an interpretation of the Constitution. The majority opinion may run seven columns, the minority opinions five or six columns, and there will be a lead story and other collateral stories that may increase space requirements to sixteen or seventeen columns. Is this one news event worth that space to his readers? It may mean adding two pages to the edition at a cost of several hundred dollars or slashing other interesting news. It might well mean both on a day of heavy news. He may find that some of the advertisements have optional dates and can be held over for another day without losing them. He may find that it would be cheaper to leave out some advertisements instead of adding two or four pages. His judgment on this one problem can affect every story going into the newspaper.

When it comes to editing the news many other problems arise, and all the critical ones are placed in the managing editor's lap. Of course the established character of his newspaper will in large degree determine the treatment of the news. Reader interest again is the test. If conservative, the editors will handle the news seriously, perhaps even dully; if frivolous, they will handle it lightly, giving scant space to news of governmental origin and featuring facetious and human interest news. Questions of libel, of good taste, of public interest, of accuracy, will intrude. The space for each story, the kind of headline, and the display will come up for decision, and he must have all the answers. All managing editors seek bright, intelligent, and interesting presentation of the news. Some allow facts to be stretched to obtain effects. Others insist that the unfolding of

the facts provide their own color. Some have a sense of humor. Others none.

Some newspapers are not allowed to be funny even when they try; their readers insist on taking them seriously. This happened to *The New York Times* a few years ago. It ran a bright story about a sea serpent in the Caribbean. It illustrated it with a sketch made by a ship's officer, showing this fabulous animal floating in great coils over the sea, with two bulging eyes, two perked-up ears, and a smug expression. It was supposed to be amusing. It was. Yet thousands of readers accepted it literally as a new scientific discovery. Foreign correspondents cabled the news abroad; one going so far as to send the sketch by radiophoto to London.

All newspapers try to maintain uniformity in printing the news. Each has a style in punctuation, in capitalization, and in spelling, and, as already mentioned, most managing editors draft a style book, which is used in the news department, in the composing room, and by the proofroom, giving all the accepted forms. Others, mostly small town editors, follow the style set by the Associated Press, the United Press, or whichever news service they take. But no style book, no matter how carefully kept up to date, can cover all contingencies. New individuals and new places keep bobbing up in the news. It is a rare day that the managing editor is not called upon to pass on several of them.

Many of these decisions demand intimate knowledge of the countries and languages concerned. A false step can make the editor and the newspaper look both ignorant and silly. A war in China raises a whole crop of them as the armies enter unfamiliar territory and new leaders arrive at the front.

The managing editor must decide when Petrograd becomes Leningrad, when Christiania becomes Oslo. He must rule on whether it is Welsh rarebit or rabbit; Yugoslav or Yugoslavian; Mohammed or Mahomet; Hindu or Hindoo; grip or gripe; Eskimo or Esquimaux; hydroplane or seaplane; spelled or

spelt; trousers or trowsers; Habsburg or Hapsburg; and a thousand other details. Then there are such matters as Mount Vernon or Mt. Vernon; Henry VIII or Henry the Eighth; Oskar Straus or Oscar Straus; Crown Prince Gustaf Adolf and King Gustavus Adolphus; and so on to infinity.

The managing editor is supposed to know; whether he does or not, he makes his ruling after consulting the best authorities, and stands by it, for the same newspaper cannot have a variety of spellings and usages. It would confuse the readers.

Finally comes the display of the news. Naturally every managing editor wants his newspaper to make an attractive and interesting appearance. He parades his offerings to the best advantage. Like the prima donna he seeks the plaudits of his audience. He gives a daily performance and he seeks to bring his readers back again and again to his news columns. All the work of the day reaches its climax in the finished newspaper set before the reader. Here is his opportunity for brilliance. This is the real test of news appraisal.

Page one is the newspaper's front, and on it goes the best that the day's news has provided. The managing editor and his editors concentrate their greatest effort on it. Like other pages, however, it has only eight columns, and so can carry only a limited number of news items—generally twelve to fifteen. On it must be spread the accounts of the news events of major interest or importance to the newspaper's readers, so that they cannot be overlooked. Frequently these will occupy the whole page and crowd off all other stories, but when possible the editors like to give page one variety and color. They may place on it a good sports story, an interesting scientific discovery, an intriguing crime, a light, human-interest story, an important obituary, some unusual or unexpected event, or anything they may have that will catch the imagination or excite the curiosity of the readers. They give it their choicest morsels of news.

With the leading newspapers averaging about two hundred columns of reading matter daily, only about 4 per cent of the

news can get on page one, and 96 per cent must of necessity go on other pages. What is more, the same kind of stories cannot be placed on page one day after day. There must be variety in news as well as in make-up. The result is that many interesting and important stories find themselves in less conspicuous parts of the newspaper. Managing editors are subject to constant criticism over burying stories on inside pages. Much of it comes from pressure groups. When their angle in the news gets prominent display it is taken for granted as being their due; when it is not, the managing editor is roundly condemned. The flow of news is, of course, the determining factor.

While page one is the best page for news display, there are others which are readily accessible to the reader. As most large newspapers are printed in two sections, there are the second front—the page starting the second section—which is usually kept clear of advertisements, and the back pages of the two sections. The latter, however, are choice positions for advertisements, a premium being sometimes charged for them, and so they may not have much news space left. Page three, to which the reader turns when he opens the newspaper, and the page opposite the editorial page are also considered good news pages. On these the managing editor puts items of particular interest and his best news pictures. On some newspapers the second front is reserved for city news. Most successful newspapers go on to dress every page, and to bring all the news together under its various classifications.

The competent managing editor is ready for all emergencies. He keeps an open mind on the news. Without hesitation he will rip an edition to pieces and make it over to meet a sudden shift in the news. Stories like the death of President Harding and the Lindbergh kidnapping broke just before or just after the first edition of the morning newspapers—in the eastern states. Managing editors threw out column after column of inside-page news to make space, switched page one news inside, and made over their newspapers to meet the occasion. Their final editions

the next morning bore little resemblance to their early editions. Normal news standards fly out the window when big news breaks.

When it is possible to see the big event coming, such as a national election, the managing editor is ready for it long in advance. Its coverage may be arranged weeks before, with matter like biographical sketches of the leading candidates written and in type, those of the winner being used when the returns warrant it. Everything is done to speed the news. For instance, editors know that men must die some time, so obituaries of leading citizens are prepared at leisure long in advance and then kept in type for the eventuality. John D. Rockefeller's obituary was standing in type for decades. When a prominent man dies, no matter how suddenly, the editor has the type and picture at hand, and with a new paragraph or two to tell the time and the circumstances drops them into the edition.

An interesting story of this sort was the death of King George V. Newspapers were ready for his death long in advance, many of them from his previous serious illness. As his obituary would require great space, his prospective death was a continuing problem for editors for more than a week. On *The New York Times* this problem was solved very simply. Four complete pages were prepared in advance, one giving an outline of the king's reign, one devoted to pictures of him from birth right through his life, one giving the career of the Prince of Wales, who was to become Edward VIII, of the Duke of York, who would become heir presumptive to the throne, and the royal family, and the fourth page taken up with pictures of the new king and of the royal family, including the little princesses. These four pages could be added to any edition in a few minutes. In fact as soon as the first edition was sent to press each night a separate press was prepared with these four pages added to the regular pages. Headlines and leads were rewritten daily, bringing everything up to date. On a flash from London giving

the time of the king's death the newspaper could go to press in seconds.

The managing editor's duties are numerous and arduous, and not the least of them is composing the problems and complaints of his staff. Every reporter thinks his story should get more space and better display. Many of them want to become foreign correspondents. Most of the foreign correspondents want to become statesmen and solve the problems of the world. All of them want increases in salary. And his editors think they are much more important than their salary checks indicate. Then he has to deal with the complaints of the readers, including libel cases, the suggestions of the breakfast-table editors and the amateurs, and the ideas and ideals of his publisher. He finds that perfection is taken for granted, while a seemingly trivial typographical error can be a matter of grave consequence. Praise he seldom gets.

A managing editor, however, has his own ways of learning of his success or failure. When Mussolini orders American importers of Italian wines not to advertise in his newspaper because Il Duce does not like its news; when Hitler issues similar instructions to German shipping lines; when Stalin sends an emissary to the office to inform him that his correspondent can enter Russia but will not be allowed access to the news (all of which happened to one managing editor in New York before the Russian-German trade agreement); then he knows that he is walking down the center and doing the proper thing by his American readers. When he sees his circulation figures rising despite depressions and recessions, he knows he has the support of many silent readers. He knows he is doing a good job.

VII. City Editor

EVERY newspaper gives its best to its own immediate neighborhood. Here it is as much a local institution as the school, the library, or the church. Often it is a daily visitor to the home, and every member of the family turns to it for information. Here it is respected or mistrusted, for many of its readers have direct personal knowledge of the news it prints and the service it renders. Here the bulk of its circulation is centered, and this is the source of most of its advertising revenue. Here its editors and reporters walk the earth, eat and sleep, vote and pay their taxes. They have a personal stake in the community like other citizens and share its civic pride, or want of it. A newspaper must make good in its own neighborhood or perish.

The problem of covering the news of the local community is the duty of the city editor and the city staff. They must have an intimate knowledge of its problems and its personalities. The larger the community the more difficult it is; yet it remains essentially the same problem whether in Whitefield, New Hampshire, or New York City. News breaks through definite channels; it cannot do otherwise. Cover these channels and you catch the news—much like casting a net across a salmon stream. The capable city editor of Reno could with some adjustment direct a city staff in Chicago; the New Yorker could function in Baton Rouge. The basic technic is the same.

New York, of course, with its vast area and teeming millions is the most difficult city in America to cover, possibly the most difficult in the world. No one man can know its hundreds of

local neighborhoods first hand, for New York is a conglomeration of little villages, each with its own problems and peculiarities. There are Park Avenue with its high-toned and self-conscious society; Harlem near by with its thousands of untouchables; Yorkville with its Hitlerite and liberal Germans; Little Italy with its squalor and Fascists; Wall Street with its stocks and bonds and banks; Broadway with its tinsel and bright lights; the Bowery with its waifs and strays; Seventh Avenue with its garment center and class consciousness; West Street with its ships and seamen; Chinatown with its joss houses and dragons; East Side, West Side, the Bronx, Queens, Coney Island, Hell's Kitchen, the Tenderloin, Times Square, and the extensive spaces of Brooklyn with a greater population than many proud states. Every race, every color, every creed is represented, raising issues so acute and so diverse that one mind could not possibly embrace them. There are vivid contrasts on all sides. Opulent wealth is only one short block from extreme poverty. Gaudy ugliness frequently sits beside sublime beauty. Virtue and vice, gluttony and asceticism, noise and repose all are here. Civilization shows all that is best and all that is sordid. Gaiety and misery walk hand in hand. Thousands dance and flit about in the night while some miserable wretch drops into the river. It is an extraordinary city. It offers a copious harvest for the intelligent city editor who can see life as men lead it.

The problem of covering New York—and the same is true of other communities—has been further complicated by the great expansion of news interest in the past generation. No longer is it sufficient to deal with the City Hall, the police, a few fires, and call it a day. A gathering of scientists at Columbia University may produce more important news than police headquarters. The openings of the Metropolitan Opera and the Horse Show with their color and glamour will each get more news space in New York than the best murder story of the year. Music alone will fill more columns in an edition than all the crime news. Housing or child labor or relief or a strike can well be the

featured news of the day. A sharp rise or a drastic decline in stocks in Wall Street, the maiden voyage of the S.S. *Normandie*, the explosion of the *Hindenburg*, or any one of a hundred similar occurrences may pre-empt page one. A cure for cancer would be a major news story.

What is more, most city staffs in New York also cover the suburbs, and these are usually considered as including the whole of Long Island, the State of New Jersey, and Westchester and Putnam counties. All in all the average New York city staff deals with 12,000,000 people and many thousand square miles of territory.

City editors have met this situation in two ways: first, by the employment of district men who live and work in the local community and report their news to the office by telephone; second, by the development of a staff of news specialists, each with long training and expert knowledge in one news field.

These district men operate in close contact with the police, who are quickly informed of any activity in their immediate neighborhoods. In Manhattan the district coverage is elaborate. Several men are maintained in an office either across the street or near police headquarters in Centre Street. There they know at once of any police move, and of all fire alarms, and have criminal records, photographs, and fingerprints readily available. These men also cover the lower end of the Island. Other men are kept in close touch with the other important police stations, such as the Forty-seventh Street Station in the Times Square area, the West Thirtieth Street Station, the stations on the Upper East Side, the Upper West Side, and in Harlem. A man is also stationed at Bellevue Hospital where the whole backwash of the city may be observed and where autopsies are made and the morgue is located.

Other district men work with the police from the Brooklyn headquarters, and from stations in the Bronx and Staten Island, with generally a man in Coney Island. Several New York newspapers obtain their news of Queens from the *Gelwicks News*

Service, using staff men only on major stories, while others maintain their own coverage, operating from Long Island City and Jamaica. Staff district men are also kept in Newark, in Jersey City, in White Plains to cover Westchester County and in Mineola to cover Nassau County. Other suburban news centers, places such as Atlantic City, Montclair, New Jersey, and Greenwich, Connecticut, are covered by local news services or reporters regularly employed on the local newspapers.

In covering Manhattan and the Bronx city editors also have available the output of the City News Association. This is a co-operative news-gathering organization financed by the metropolitan newspapers. It covers routine and spontaneous news of the police department, the fire department, all the courts, the municipal government, and other activities. Its work is complete and certain; its stories objective and deliberately colorless. Its reporters work hand in hand with the reporters of the newspapers, protecting the latter on many occasions while they leave the scene of the story to telephone the office or to write the story and carrying on after they are through. Usually the City News copy is incorporated into the stories of the regular reporters or rewritten in the office, each city editor desiring his own story of each event. It is often used in its original form, however, on minor stories not otherwise covered. In elections the city news expands its facilities to cover all boroughs, and gathers the returns for the newspapers.

Most city editors purchase the service of the Standard News Association, which is owned by John Eddy and covers New Jersey, Long Island, Brooklyn, and Westchester County. It also concentrates on routine, objective coverage of its territory, and city editors help themselves to the news facts it gathers with faith in its reliability.

News sources or news channels which the New York city editors cover as a matter of daily routine include: the Board of Health; the Board of Education; the Park Department; the New York Stock Exchange and the Curb Exchange; the port of

New York with its arriving and departing ships; the major political organizations, including Tammany Hall; the Federal Prosecutor's office; the District Attorney's office; the theatrical district, including motion pictures, and opera and other music; the leading churches; the important colleges and scientific groups; the museums and libraries; labor organizations; the Broadway and Fifth Avenue Associations and other civic and patriotic groups; the aviation fields; the railroad stations; the leading hotels; the bigger hospitals; the important real estate firms; the book publishers; and racial and nationalistic groups.

Not only must the reporter know the latest developments of the event he is covering, he must also have a thorough knowledge of its background, of its scene, and of the character of the persons figuring in it. Only then can he write an intelligent and significant story. As his time is limited at best and as there is little chance for deliberation, he must know all this almost instinctively. This is possible only through long familiarity with the subject and the persons concerned. The competent city staff today has men capable of dealing with any subject that arises in the news, be it a new measurement of the speed of light or the escape of a notorious gangster from the Tombs. The city staff can show as much diversity of talent and expert information as many colleges; and its men must have practical knowledge of men and events as well as theory and be able to express it in nontechnical language that the man on the street can read.

The modern city staff has reporters acquainted with every phase of crime, including the latest methods of committing crime and of detecting it, many of them being on speaking terms with leading gangsters. It has men who have devoted their entire lives to writing on local, state, and federal politics, and who know all important politicians personally. It has experts on labor organization and methods, on relief and housing, on social service and unemployment insurance. It has other men familiar with the workings of the courts, municipal, state, and federal, who know legal terminology and procedure well enough to write

about them in simple English. It has men who know art, music, the theater, the motion picture, the modern dance, and literature, whose criticisms of these carry weight in each separate field. It has men who know every last development in science and who give their whole time to attending the deliberations of scientific bodies and recording each new theory, hypothesis, and discovery. It has men who know military and naval maneuvers and armaments; aviation, commercial and military; ships and shipping; and wireless and radio broadcasting. It has women who cover news of society, of women's clubs and their activities, and of religion and churches. It also has experts in philately, bridge, cooking, styles, real estate, automobiles, archaeology, education, banking, currency, gardening, agriculture, and parks. Besides all these the city editor can on occasion call in the experts of the sports department on all phases of sports and of the financial department on utilities, railroads, holding companies, mining, and on other business, industrial, and financial news. He also has available men who can speak and work in most modern languages.

The city editor, himself, must have a broad knowledge of, and wide sympathy with, the community he is covering. He must know its problems, its conditions, and its personalities. He must have a wide understanding of national and world news, for often his local story fits into the major news of the day. Above all, he must know his own newspaper and be able to sense the needs of his own group of readers. He must be able to lead and direct a staff of one hundred or more intelligent men and women and maintain *esprit de corps*. He makes the original decision on every news story written in the office.

Each reporter on returning from his assignment reports to his city editor for instructions. He quickly informs him on what has happened, where, when, why, and how. He tells him of any unusual developments or difficulties that he encountered. The city editor may ask a question or two to bring out some phase of the news which he may consider interesting or important. He may

ask the reporter to check back on some angles of it. He will make sure of the reliability of the sources. He will want all his news checked and rechecked. He wants no errors of facts, or of any other kind for that matter. With full information on the story he will decide what to do with it.

This will involve many things. The city editor knows how his newspaper treats the news. He knows the space available. He also knows the news the other reporters produced, and he has a pretty good idea of the general run of national and foreign news for the day. He will then instruct the reporter to write his story, specifying the exact length, anywhere from a paragraph to a page or more. He may favor a particular kind of lead and go on to inform the reporter how to marshal his facts. He may ask that it be treated facetiously. It all depends on the story itself, how it lends itself to display, and how best to write it. He must provide an interesting budget of his news for his own readers—not for the readers of some other newspaper.

City news differs from most other news—national and foreign—in that the bulk of it deals not with situations or conditions, but with living persons who are going to read it a few hours later. If they do not like it they can be indignant; if they are wronged they can sue for libel. An epidemic of corrections is bad for any city editor; an epidemic of libel actions is fatal. The city editor not only must be sure of his facts, he must be prepared to prove them in court. The result is that the city editor must be cautious, and, as a consequence, many interesting features of the news never see the light of day.

It should be stated here that no city editor on a decent newspaper ever requires a reporter to write one sentence the reporter does not believe to be true.

The public record, of course, is available to the reporters, and it is privileged by law. It covers all the deliberations and actions of the municipal government, all court documents, testimony, pleadings, and decisions, and formal charges and actions of the police. Then there is public interest. Hundreds of different

kinds of stories come into this latter category. In many of these the reporter and the city editor may expose conditions in public institutions or exploit charges made by citizens against the government with the assurance that while their information cannot be proven in courts of law, it is nonetheless correct, and is information that should be supplied to the free citizens of the nation. If sued for libel the worst they can expect is a six-cent verdict.

When they depart from the public record and public interest reporters and city editors are wary. They state demonstrable facts as such and for the rest quote their news authorities. They "tie the can right to them," as the saying goes. The same is done in the headlines. When they cannot get a responsible person to stand sponsor for the information they are giving, they tie it to "responsible circles," a "high authority," "opinion in banking circles," or any one of a dozen such formulas. In a reliable newspaper these are exactly what they indicate and may represent the President of the United States, the Governor of New York, the Mayor of the city, the House of Morgan, or the District Attorney. The city editor and the reporter definitely and positively avoid committing their newspaper, when that is possible.

Nevertheless the casual reader, and frequently the intelligent reader, persists in attributing to the newspaper itself information that is quoted from some responsible source, and sometimes condemns the newspaper for statements that its own editors do not personally accept.

The efficient city editor goes aggressively after the news. He does not wait for it to drop into his lap. He has a futures file, in which he keeps data on stories to be developed later. He has an idea file, in which he places ideas for potential stories. He reads his own newspaper and his competitor's closely, ever alert for news possibilities. One story frequently suggests another. He is ready at all times to make another assignment, or to shift front on the news as it changes or a new story breaks. The beat in an early edition of a rival newspaper can be obtained for his own later editions. He welcomes ideas for stories, and he gets many

of them from his reporters and fellow-editors. Friends of the newspaper and readers and press agents send him many more. He explores every news possibility. Unpromising tips often develop good stories.

The more competent his staff the more news it gets. The reporter who knows his field and is trusted by the individuals who dominate it gets more than the green and unknown reporter. Often one reporter blankets his news territory and cannot be beaten. He will be handed news stories that must be treated tactfully. At other times a word here and a word there—dropped by news friends—will acquaint him with some news that is developing. Important events are generally discounted well in advance. Decency and honesty in handling the news bring dividends to the reporter, the city editor, and the newspaper.

An instance of this kind involved one of the largest bank mergers in American financial history. City editors knew that something was afoot, but could obtain no information on it. Reporters simply got nowhere. Then one Friday night, the president of one of these banks called a city editor by telephone. They had never met. He informed the city editor that it was quite true that the merger had been agreed on, and it was to be announced officially on the following Tuesday. He explained that he feared a leak and consequent misrepresentation of the situation. So he wanted to give it to a man who would treat it conservatively and accurately. He did. The newspaper ran the story on page one, basing it on information in "well-informed circles." It was "lifted" by other newspapers, all of which confined themselves to the information in the original story. The way a story is treated in the first newspaper to print it usually determines how it will be used in the whole press of the nation. Intelligent news sources know this, and take advantage of it.

The greatest beat of this kind was scored by *The New York Times* on the departure of the Lindberghs from America. While many newspapers and their reporters had hounded the Lind-

berghs from pillar to post, giving them little or no privacy, *The Times* had not. It had handled the news of the Colonel's historic flight and many other matters in close co-operation with him and always with restraint and consideration for his desires. Lauren D. Lyman, one of its three aviation experts at this time, was on intimate terms with the Lindberghs. When the Colonel and his wife decided to live abroad, they sent for Lyman and gave him the full details of the projected trip, stipulating only that nothing be printed about it until after they had sailed. This stipulation Lyman and *The Times* fulfilled.

The Times got this story on Thursday afternoon and did not use it until the final edition on Monday morning. Only Lyman and three editors were informed about it, as there was grave danger of a leak. The radio, columnists, and other newspapers were closely watched for any hint of the departure of the Lindberghs. There was none, despite the possibility of some reporter's recognizing the Lindberghs as they left Englewood, New Jersey, and boarded the ship. The copy and the headlines for the story were sent to the composing room after midnight on Sunday night, and set into type by old compositors who could be trusted. The proofs were sent direct to the night editors; none to the proofroom. At 2:10 A.M. the story was dropped into page one and sent to press. When the late city edition appeared in *The Times* city room it caused as much of a sensation as it did in the offices of rival newspapers—but less consternation.

Lyman got the Pulitzer prize for reporting for it, and *The Times* got the prestige of a major beat. Incidentally, the New York *Herald Tribune* could have had that story, if Colonel Lindbergh could have located C. B. Allen, then its aviation expert. When Lyman appeared in the city room the next afternoon, the staff stood up and cheered him.

News does not always come easy. Often it must be extracted from persons and sources that are trying to conceal it. City editors may know it is there and still be unable to obtain it. This is particularly true of municipal graft and incompetence. Every

city editor keeps a watchful eye on the local government, be it honest or otherwise. Long familiarity with the sad story of municipal rule in American cities makes him suspect every ordinance enacted, every franchise, every contract, and all expenditure of public money.

The city editor is his brother's keeper. He gives the full measure of publicity to the hospital that accepts public funds but refuses to accept the dying child; the policeman who beats up the suspected but innocent citizen; the lucrative receivership for the contributor to the party funds; and the reduced real estate assessment for the ward politician. Any abuse of public trust—the long-term franchise to the transit line, the unwarranted rise in the rates for gas, electricity, or telephones, the change in the zoning laws for some favorite—is exposed in the news columns. The city editor gives the information to the readers, but often nothing is done about it by a complacent public, even when he campaigns for action day after day. Reform in America has rarely lacked the co-operation of the press. Indeed the press has usually done the leading.

It was *The New York Times* in 1870, then under George Jones, that opened the fight on the all-powerful Tweed Ring. It kept at it year in and year out until it smashed the Ring and drove its leaders from office. It was a spectacular battle. Tweed in turn tried to smash *The Times*, tried to silence it, tried to bribe it, tried to buy it. One of his henchmen offered \$5,000,000 to Jones to lay off, a tremendous sum in those days. But Jones and his colleagues could not be turned from their purpose. They got the evidence and printed it. Tweed had to go.

As Melville E. Stone once said: "If we are to maintain our liberty someone must be on guard." This duty the city editor readily accepts. The history of American journalism records thousands of instances where an aroused newspaper has cleaned up local politics, won important reforms, defeated the grafters, and brought about the arrest and conviction of criminals. The New York *World* conducted many such campaigns, ranging

from the exposure of the Ku Klux Klan to profiteering in sugar. The Scripps-Howard newspapers have traced many a trail of local corruption, vice, and racketeering, one of its latest being the disclosure of police alliance with vice in San Francisco. Howard Kahn and the St. Paul *Daily News* brought about a clean-up of St. Paul, long the safe haven of big-time gangsters. The Boston *Post* started the investigation of Charles Ponzi and his get-rich-quick scheme. The Chicago *Tribune*, the Kansas City *Star*, the Milwaukee *Journal* and the Des Moines *Register-Tribune* brought to light the "Drake estate" swindle with its 70,000 victims. The St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* among others has led recent fights for the removal of venal judges. Many other newspapers have traced murderers or other criminals and brought them to the bar. Walter Liggett and Don Mellett, militant and fearless editors, paid with their lives for their efforts to bring criminals and their political allies to justice.

Nor does the city editor confine himself to the negative exposure of unsavory conditions; he goes on to sponsor or support all intelligent movements for the betterment of the community in which he lives and works. No worthy cause appeals to him in vain. He relaxes his news standards and opens up his news columns to give it encouragement. The World's Fair in New York got the support of the New York newspapers. The fairs in Chicago, San Francisco and Philadelphia also had the support of the local press. The efforts of the Park Association to provide places for repose in the shade of a tree or a playground for children amid the turmoil of the city have a ready champion. The community theater, the open-air concerts, the slum-clearing program, the museums, the libraries, the hospitals, all get an abundance of news space to explain their needs and their aspirations. The newspaper, itself, often directs and finances important charities, such as the Hundred Neediest Cases to care for people in distress, fresh air funds for the underprivileged children, ice for the poor, and milk for needy infants. Most cities are

better places to live in because of the eternal vigilance of their newspapers and their city editors.

The city editor's work is never simple and never easy. He can never relax. His first duty is to his newspaper and its readers, and for them he must produce the news of the community day in and day out. He must have a sure feeling for news values. He must be able to anticipate the importance of the news and provide for ample coverage. He must be prepared for all emergencies, for news breaks in unexpected places and at unexpected times.

The routine landing of the dirigible *Hindenburg*, for instance, turned in seconds into one of the most terrible and most spectacular disasters in a decade. Most city editors had a staff reporter and a staff photographer on the scene, but one reporter could not do justice to such a story. It was vital to get more reporters to the scene quickly. Every city editor sprang into action. Each knew that the broadcasting of the news would start a flood of automobiles on the roads to Lakehurst, New Jersey, making a traffic jam which would slow down his men. *The New York Times* chartered an airplane at Floyd Bennett Field to fly four men to the scene, meanwhile as a further protection sending four more in an automobile to buck the traffic. Its airplane got over the flying field only to discover that the Naval Commanders would not turn on the landing lights. It was against orders. Their city editor held the airplane over Lakehurst while he telephoned to the Navy Department in Washington and persuaded it to issue the necessary orders. It did, and they landed and got the story in for the edition. The men in the automobile were three hours late.

Often the city editor must make hairline decisions on the news. It may be libelous. It may be overly gruesome. It may be in bad taste. It may be an unwarranted intrusion into the private life of some decent citizen. It may be an abuse of confidence. It may involve a news release fixed by the news source, which should be respected. It may involve professional ethics or pro-

fessional honor. He must give specific instructions to the reporter and to the copyreader handling the story. He can, of course, consult his managing editor when in doubt, but managing editors have their own problems, and they want city editors competent to make their own decisions.

It is even difficult at times to decide whether a story is news or advertising. Rockefeller Center commissions Paul Manship to do a piece of sculpture to decorate one of its buildings. Is that news or advertising? Beyond doubt the primary purpose is to make that building more attractive as a renting proposition. Yet it is part of the wide movement to take art into the market place. Manship is a distinguished artist. His sculpture is news. This particular piece helps to make New York City more interesting and more beautiful. The city editor will probably decide to run a story about it, illustrated with pictures. It will interest many of his readers, even if the story does help to provide the Rockefellers with some new tenants.

Take another case. Suppose some large department store decides to open a branch in New Rochelle. Is that news or advertising? Printing of the story in the news columns will doubtless advertise the venture and bring adverse criticism, yet that story is news to the people living in New Rochelle and vicinity. It means that thousands of women will not have to make a tedious trip to New York to shop. It also marks another step in the progress of the community. Some city editors, probably those with large suburban circulations, will use it; others may not. Either decision can be defended.

Under present news conditions the city staff of the metropolitan newspapers often go far afield. The city editor must have men available who can be sent to Louisiana to investigate Huey Long's dictatorship or its aftermath; to report on the condition of the share croppers in Arkansas; to brave the terrors of the coal-mine feuds of Kentucky; to get the truth on labor conditions in the automobile plants of Michigan or the textile mills of New England; to look into the power situation in the Ten-

nessee Valley; to handle any of a thousand and one acute problems throughout the nation. He must have men ready to amplify foreign or domestic news (usually printed under a dash line and called a "shirt-tail") or to write an obituary appraising the career of some important world figure. He may even cover national or international news by telephone from the home office.

The last overturn of government in Argentina was a good example of the latter. A rigid censorship effectively bottled up the correspondents of the American newspapers. Communication north by telephone, telegraph, and wireless was halted. News editors knew something was afoot, but they did not know what. When *The New York Times* did not hear from its correspondent, it tried to get in touch with him from New York. It at once encountered the censorship. It finally got through by telephone to its office in Buenos Aires by a call routed through London, only to find that its correspondent was out and could not be located. So it did the next best thing. It put a Spanish-speaking reporter on the telephone and went ahead to cover the story as if it were in the Bronx. It called officials of the new regime, the chief of police, and a newspaper editor and got from them a detailed, a vivid, and an accurate account of the whole affair.

Most of this kind of work is handled by the men on the rewrite desk. Every capable city editor maintains a highly efficient rewrite staff. It is his anchor to leeward, his final refuge in the sudden news storms, and it saves him on many an occasion. Not only does it take news over the telephone, it goes after news the same way. It checks up at all hours of the day and night on news appearing in competing newspapers. It seeks verification of news hinted at by Walter Winchell and other columnists. It tries to work up news tips into usable stories. In an emergency one of its men can be rushed out on some news story. Finally, it rewrites stories poorly done by other reporters. It can always be

counted on for good, straightaway news stories. It delivers the goods.

And so does the city editor, himself. He must react quickly and function efficiently. There may be many ways of getting a story and of writing it afterwards. He must decide on the one way that will get it into the edition in a form that will inform and entertain his readers. He must deliver daily a complete and authentic picture of the activities of the community he serves. He must have a sense of the drama of life, a feeling for its tragedies and comedies, and the artistry to portray life honestly.

VIII. Foreign Correspondent

MORE than two billion individuals like ourselves inhabit this world of ours, embracing all colors, all creeds, and all races. And like ourselves each one of these has his own problems in life which he faces as best he can. Each works and eats and sleeps. Each has his loves and his hates. Each thrills to new hope or shrinks from the terror of the unknown. Each breasts the onward tide of the present for a few short years and then is submerged in the oblivion of time. No two are alike. No individual matters much in the march of the centuries; yet any one of these two billion can make a story for tomorrow's newspaper.

All of these people come under government of some kind. More than 120 governments, imperial, national, and colonial, divide the 196,000,000 square miles of the earth. Each of these, too, has its own problems, all of them important to itself, some of interest to its neighboring states, and some of concern to the people of the United States. The nation that goes about its own business, doing the right thing by its neighbors and meeting its obligations, does not disturb international relations. Virtuous nations, like virtuous women, do not make news. At any moment, however, any one of these nations may go berserk—and some of them do, for nations are no better than the men directing them. Pride, ambition, and cupidity can seize them as they did Lucifer. But instead of being condemned to a sulphurous hell or quarantined in a lunatic asylum, they run amuck among peaceful peoples, raping, slaughtering, terrorizing—and making news.

On the modern newspaper responsibility for covering the news of these 120 governments and their two billion subjects rests with the foreign editor. He usually works in close co-operation with his managing editor in directing the newspaper's correspondents in the news centers of the world. He personally supervises a staff of subeditors or copyreaders, each a specialist in some phase of foreign news, in preparing the news of the day for publication. All newspapers take one or more of the news services—the Associated Press, the United Press, and the International News—but some metropolitan newspapers maintain their own foreign services. Some cover foreign news with their own men as if it were local news, while others use their correspondents merely to supplement the coverage of the news services.

World-news is concentrated in definite news centers. These are generally the world-capitals, where governments have their seats, where diplomats are centered, and where business and financial interests have their headquarters. The newspapers and the news services of each capital bring in all matters of interest to its government and its citizens, and there it becomes available to American correspondents. News of the far-flung British Empire, for instance, pours into London, when it does not originate there. The latest developments in Australia, India, Newfoundland, and British Guiana, are quickly reported in the British press. Likewise Paris, Berlin, Moscow, and Tokyo, each gets the news of its own domain.

The American correspondent in a foreign capital generally works in co-operation with one of the local newspapers or news services, getting proofs or ticker service. This keeps him informed of routine developments before the newspapers reach the streets. Occasionally he may take a story that he knows to be correct and send it to his newspaper, but more often he rewrites it, incorporating his own information and featuring the angles that will interest American readers. Naturally a story written by a French reporter for consumption in Paris would not always

suit readers in Chicago. Where it might be worth two columns to Parisian readers it might be worth less than a quarter-column to readers on Michigan Avenue. Their interests and their news needs are different. The correspondent has his own readers in mind at all times.

In the years immediately following the World War there was a vast expansion in the foreign news-gathering forces of the American press, both by news services and individual newspapers. Bureaus were opened or enlarged in all the active capitals of the world. Correspondents trained in objective reporting and steeped in the traditions of a free and fearless press were dispatched to the far corners of the earth to get the truth for the American public. For the first time, in many cases, American newspapers encountered the devious ways of foreign governments, matched wits with Old World diplomacy, and met the competition of European newspapers in their own backyard.

Naturally each news service and newspaper placed its men to suit its own needs or to match its local competition. There was no uniformity, although most of them provided for coverage in London, in Paris, in Berlin, in Rome, in Shanghai, and in Tokyo. Others placed correspondents in Moscow to report the activities of Lenin and Stalin and their communist experiment, in Geneva to study the efforts of the League of Nations, and in Vienna to watch the wreckage of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the ever-troublesome Balkans. Still others placed correspondents in many of the quieter news centers like Dublin, Madrid, Stockholm, Warsaw, The Hague, Prague, Istanbul, Jerusalem, Calcutta, Cairo, Manila, Mexico City, Panama City, Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Aires, and Lima. No event of consequence can happen in any part of the world without an observer of the American press on the scene.

Besides expansion, the World War caused other great changes in the coverage of news, as it did in most human activities. Probably the most important of these was due to the rapid spread of fascism and communism, ideologies that fed on the sense of

despair of the vanquished and the futility of the victors. With them bloomed two by-products of the war—propaganda and censorship. Truth no longer prevailed in dictator countries. It did not serve the new masters. Today three-quarters of the peoples of the world suffer under this mental blight even in peacetime, while the new European War has extended it also to the British and French Empires.

This new dispensation found a former bank bandit of the Caucasus the autocrat of 160,000,000 Russians; a former Austrian painter the Fuehrer of 80,000,000 Germans, and a former Milan editor the Duce of 41,000,000 Italians. Twenty-odd imitators controlled the destinies of as many other nations. This crop of dictators maintained itself in power by ruthless suppression of all opposition and complete control of public opinion. A regimented press became an instrument of propaganda. Facts were colored or ignored to create the desired impression. A favorable political atmosphere was manufactured much as we would air-condition a building. Adulation was carried to new heights. A parade of usurpers across the pages of history was painted as the forward march of demigods.

Control of world opinion was different. The dictators could provide neither the authority nor the machinery to regulate the minds of men beyond their borders. Great efforts, however, were made by all the dictators to checkmate foreign correspondents or to vitiate their efforts. Censorship was brought to new perfection. All communications were supervised. Laws were decreed providing heavy penalties for publication of certain kinds of information. News sources were regimented. Prison terms were imposed on nationals giving unauthorized information to the foreign press. Propaganda was fed to correspondents. Their opportunity for observation was restricted. What they wrote had to be approved. Some of them were expelled. In many cases their newspapers were barred from the country. Some dictators, or their tools, even went so far as to "plant"

false information on correspondents, and then discipline them for using it.

American editors were naturally interested in these dictatorships, for many of their readers had their background in these countries. They were not interested in the propaganda. They wanted to know what was happening in these countries, and no more. The more rigid the censorship, the more drastic the regimentation, the more abundant the propaganda, the more determined they were to get the real truth and to spread it across the pages of their newspapers. They got it, and every intelligent American today knows the truth about Russia, Italy, Germany, and the other dictatorships.

Gathering news in London, Paris, Prague, and other foreign capitals with a free press and free speech presented at first much the same problem as covering it in Washington or New York. Differences of language, of customs, of background, intrude, but that is all. Gathering the news under dictatorships is something else, and at first was a new experience for American correspondents. It presented two distinct difficulties: first, getting the truth in the fog of misrepresentation, exaggeration, and propaganda and, second, finding means of sending the truth through censorships and controlled communications to the American press.

In many instances the dictatorships centered their efforts on concealing the exact facts, realizing that once the facts were known they would ultimately find their way into the American press. They might rebuke or warn the correspondent and if he persisted in "misrepresentation" expel him. Others went the whole hog in concealing the facts and barring their export when known.

The correspondent working in the foreign capital normally has four sources of information: the local press, government officials, his friends, and his own personal observations. Under dictatorships the first three of these are denied to him or at least severely limited by regimentation and intimidation. This confines him to his own observations. He can be certain only

of what he sees and hears himself. As he cannot be in more than one place at one time his news range is gravely restricted in dictator nations. He can and does, of course, measure the news in the local press against his own previous experience and use it with proper qualifications.

In former days correspondents maintained working arrangements with native newspapermen in distant cities, and thus had observers on the spot to work under their instructions. This arrangement is now worthless, for the correspondent gets the same official version that is printed in the press of the capital. One enterprising English correspondent in Berlin tried using the telephone to cover a big demonstration in Munich. He called up officials and others and did get some additional information, but he got himself expelled. He wrote that the marchers carried bayoneted rifles. They had no bayonets. His inaccuracy was used to get rid of an aggressive newspaperman.

The American correspondent who makes his home in the capital he is covering, especially one accompanied by his family, soon gets an accurate picture of the living conditions of the people, for he is one of them. The country itself is his laboratory. His wife in her marketing, his children in the schools, his servants and their problems, his visits to restaurants and theaters for entertainment, supply background for his work. Besides, he himself is forever on the go, attending public functions, meeting important officials, listening to speeches, reading the local newspapers, listening to the radio, discussing problems with informed journalistic friends and maintaining contact with American consular and diplomatic representatives. He is already familiar with world-events and current international trends, especially as they affect the nation he is covering.

He keeps close watch on expenditures for relief, labor and trade conditions, military and naval armaments, the national budget, and the interplay of domestic politics. In regimented nations frankness is lacking about most of these fields, but the correspondent notes one fact here and another there, perhaps

months later, and sees their relationship. A casual remark in an official speech in Cologne may dovetail into a fact disclosed weeks later in a newspaper in Dresden to make a story of international significance.

The gathering of news under dictatorships is often fantastic and always interesting.

One of the many experiences of the chief correspondent of an American news service in Berlin will illustrate this. His telephone rang one beautiful spring day just as he was about to leave his office for lunch. The call was from an old friend, a man who had held office in former German governments and who, though a liberal at heart, was maintaining friendly relations with the Nazi regime. He had secretly been helpful to the correspondent on several occasions. After the usual remarks about the weather and inquiries about their families, the ex-official asked:

"Have you read Schiller lately?"

The correspondent replied that he had not.

"Well, you should," continued his friend. "I have taken up Schiller again, and I find him entrancingly beautiful. Take my advice and read him; you will find him both profitable and pleasurable."

The correspondent remarked that he would that very day.

A few minutes later the correspondent took his hat and stick and left for the Schiller restaurant. There he ordered lunch, meanwhile glancing casually over the pages of a newspaper, but keeping an eye on everyone entering the restaurant. Soon he saw his friend of the telephone conversation enter and take a seat.

The correspondent finished a leisurely lunch, never once looking in the direction of his friend. He then got up to make his departure. In passing his friend's table he stopped short as if surprised to find him there. They greeted each other as would acquaintances who had not met in some time. As they shook

hands the friend slipped the correspondent a small folded paper.

Back in his office the correspondent examined the paper. On it in block letters were written a few words which apprised him of an important news event. These few words with the background the correspondent could provide made a news story that was prominently displayed on the front pages of a thousand American newspapers the next morning.

Equally fantastic was the way the correspondent of a leading New York newspaper received information on the fight of the Catholic Church against Nazi discipline and regimentation. It came in mysterious forms and from two different sources, one in Northern Germany, the other in the South. The correspondent might find an unsigned letter in his hotel room. Some stranger might slip him a note in a railroad station or at the opera. He never knew where and in what form it might come next. At first he suspected the information and used it cautiously. Soon he discovered that it was accurate to the last detail. Then he made the most of it. His dispatches were reprinted in all democratic countries and gave the world its only correct version of this critical situation.

This went on for months. Then it stopped abruptly. The correspondent was more mystified than ever. Nothing had been said to him officially. It stopped, and that was all. Months later he had an opportunity to see a list of persons sent to concentration camps. On it he found the names of two of his friends, both Catholic priests, one from Northern Germany, the other from the South. The date of their incarceration coincided with the stoppage of his information.

The experiences of Clarence K. Streit during Mussolini's famous march on Rome are typical of the conditions American correspondents face when big news is in the making. Mr. Streit at that time was the correspondent of the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* and was anxious—perhaps overanxious—to get the true picture of the situation to his readers.

When the show-down came [he says], the Facta Government seemed determined to fight. We awoke that morning to find wire-entanglements and troops at the entries to Rome and armored cars screeching through the empty streets. When we tried to put the news on the wires we found no wires to put it on. The government had simply cut all communications, press or private, by telephone, telegraph, or what not. The receiving clerks had been ordered to accept and to send nothing. It was very effective, except suddenly and completely to cut off communications between a great power and the rest of the world is bound to awaken suspicion that all is not well. How long it would have lasted I don't know, but around noon word got out that the king had refused to sign the decrees setting up a state of siege on which all these precautions were based. The result was disorganization and overcrowding of the wires.

The king then invited Mussolini to form a coalition cabinet and the next morning the Duce arrived in Rome, not on a white charger at the head of his blackshirts as he has since been painted, but in a sleeping car. I was at the station to meet him. There was not enough of a crowd to make that difficult. Soon afterwards the blackshirt contingents, which had been arriving by train and truck and on foot, made their official entry with a big parade through the city. The Roman crowds showed little or no enthusiasm during the parade.

That night in my story to America I wrote that Rome showed "no great enthusiasm" for the fascists. When I saw that story in print a fortnight later I found that the censor had removed the "no," and had me reporting "great enthusiasm," giving a totally wrong impression—and first impressions are often the very devil to undo. Fortunately censors are not often clever.

Next to Mussolini the most interesting figure in Rome those days was Vorofsky, the Russian Ambassador. His position was critical to say the least. A few days later Mr. Streit got around to seeing him and wrote a story on Vorofsky's views of the situation.

I personally succeeded [he says of this experience] in submitting this story to the censor in the Ministry of the Interior instead of

handing it in at the telegraph window where I would be in ignorance of its fate. Well, the censor cut the story a bit, but less than I had expected, and marked, it "OK" for transmission. It was ten days later before I discovered that this dispatch had never left Rome. The censor's tactics in this case was to allay the correspondent's suspicions by affable liberalism and then quietly kill the whole dispatch.

And so Mussolini was on his way with a regimented press at home and rigid censorship of all external communications to record his progress. How effective this control became can be illustrated by a more recent incident. This story was told by two of the Italian newspapermen who attended the session of the League of Nations that took up the Ethiopian question for the first time. With the help of the free air of Geneva and a little wine they unburdened their souls.

Shortly before they left home, they said, the annual dog show was held in Rome. The Duce's daughter, Countess Ciano, entered a dog. Despite its exalted sponsorship the dog was not good enough to win one of the coveted blue ribbons. The Countess was infuriated. That night a general order was issued to the Italian press, so these correspondents said, that until further notice no newspaper was to print the picture of a dog. Thus the officials of the show were rebuked, and the matrons who did win blue ribbons were denied the satisfaction of having their pictures with their dogs in the newspapers.

These same newspapermen were in Geneva some months later, when the Italian correspondents accredited to the League made their demonstration before the session considering sanctions against Italy. This was a gross violation of journalistic ethics. They were ousted by the League, but won the approbation of the Duce and national honors.

Any doubt of the part the press plays in the Italian picture was removed when Mussolini, in pique at Great Britain, recalled all the Italian correspondents in London and disposed of the coronation of George VI with a couple of sentences. Later, when relations with Britain improved, some of these in-

struments of national policy were allowed to return to London.

Similar conditions, different only in degree, prevail in all the other dictatorships. Germany has expelled a score or more correspondents for various "offenses," the real offense being their efforts to report the truth. These include Dorothy Thompson, now of the New York *Herald Tribune* Syndicate, and Edgar Mowrer of the Chicago *Daily News*. Norman Ebutt, the capable and experienced correspondent of *The Times* of London, was also ordered out of the Reich. The accuracy of his work was not questioned. The order was in retaliation for the action of the British government in ousting two German correspondents for activities outside journalism, not specified, but generally believed to be espionage. Italy expelled twenty-five from January, 1936, to August, 1939, including H. R. Ekins, chief correspondent of the United Press. In Greece the poet Nicholas Laidis was sentenced to a year in jail for a poem in the newspaper *Vradini*. The poem was innocent-looking, but the police found that the first letters of the lines read downward spelled out the equivalent of "Long Live the Republic." Another dictator was vindicated. In Yugoslavia, Hubert Harrison, the correspondent of *The New York Times*, was ordered expelled because he sent out an amusing story telling of the banning of the Mickey Mouse comic strip. His dispatch was confined to officially revealed facts, but that did not interest the police.

In both Russia and Germany the secret police watch every move of the foreign correspondents, even in peacetime. In Germany the correspondent is ever under the eye of the Gestapo. In Russia the technique is different. The NKVD usually tries to place one of its agents in the household of the correspondent, preferably as chauffeur. The correspondent, expecting it, and being much more subtle, quickly identifies his own pet secret agent, without the latter suspecting it, and then enjoys feeding him the kind of information he wants reported back

to police headquarters. It gives a touch of intrigue to life, which in Russia can be very dull.

In all dictatorships, and especially in Russia and Germany, great efforts are made to make the foreign correspondents feel unwelcome. In Russia they are denounced as tools of the capitalistic press. Even Walter Duranty cannot write as he pleases. His dispatches have frequently been delayed or changed by the censor. In Germany Hitler denounces the foreign correspondents in his dramatic speeches before the Reichstag. He has gone so far as to attempt to make democracies with a free press impose domestic control over the dispatches coming from Berlin. He won a favorable response to his many protests in only one nation, Italy, another dictatorship, where a newspaper was suppressed at his request.

Hitler and Goebbels have never made the full facts available to foreign correspondents, although holding them accountable for the accuracy of their reports. Official statements, official speeches, and the official version of events in the controlled press are available, but nothing more. Questions are not welcome. Officials are afraid to express an idea to foreign correspondents or to be seen associating with them. The correspondents' friends, including old friends in the profession, cannot be frank and honest with them, and so avoid them.

While endeavoring to block the correspondents at every turn and thus make them accept official propaganda, Dr. Goebbels and his assistants insist that the correspondents are free to get the facts and to send them. They argue that the German government objects only when news reports are inaccurate or false. When asked, however, to specify the inaccuracies with the assurance that they will be corrected, they become evasive. They then argue that what goes on in Germany is no affair of the foreign press. They assert that the foreign correspondents are the guests of Germany and should conduct themselves as such.

Hitler sometimes grants an interview to a correspondent, if it is felt that the correspondent is sympathetic. On several occa-

sions he has met several in a group. Much is made of this fact. However, these rare interviews are hardly satisfactory to the correspondents and not frequent enough to be of much value in covering the news of Germany. The correspondent must undergo a searching examination of his person, presumably for concealed weapons, as well as an examination of the questions he will ask. He must pass a half-dozen secretaries and functionaries before he is escorted by armed guards into the Fuehrer's presence. Then he must stand at attention while the Nazi Dictator reads him a lecture in an irritated and petulant voice. There is no discussion. Seldom does the correspondent ask for another interview.

But at that Hitler is better than Stalin. The Russian dictator is hidden and protected behind the stern walls of the Kremlin. Up to the time this book was written he had received only four newspapermen: Duranty, Roy Howard of the Scripps-Howard press, Eugene Lyons, and an English correspondent. Elaborate precautions are taken to safeguard Stalin from his admiring fellow-citizens, and the visiting newspaperman is no exception. In fact Stalin, himself, is no exception. On the few occasions when he leaves the Kremlin he must prove his own identity to regain admission—someone might be masquerading as the dictator. So infrequent are Stalin's public appearances that a report of his death received credence. It was denied officially but persisted until he ventured out into the streets of Moscow again. When Stalin does receive newspapermen he discusses domestic and foreign policies with apparent frankness. His method is not to see them.

Mussolini's personal relations with the foreign correspondents have been much more cordial—that is, until recent years. While his regimentation of the domestic press is complete and rigorous he seemed to enjoy meeting foreign newspapermen, especially visiting editors. An editor himself, and still the publisher of a newspaper for which he reserves the choicest Italian news, he has granted frequent interviews, but more to get than

to give news. He did most of the questioning. He wanted information on the foreign reaction to his policies and on conditions with which the visitor might be familiar. He thus obtained a more intimate picture of things than that furnished by the formal reports of his diplomats. His approach had been friendly, and the interview not infrequently ended with the presentation of an autographed photograph. Mussolini at first felt sure of himself in his dealings with the foreign press, even making free with the representatives of newspapers barred from Italy. Of late, however, some of these interviews did not turn out so well, for the information supplied by the Duce, himself, made a sad impression on world opinion. He is now more cautious, sees few correspondents, and is inclined to be ill-tempered with those he receives.

The newspaper correspondents maintain close relations with the accredited diplomats of their own country. Under dictatorships their embassy is probably the one place in the whole country where they can discuss problems with complete honesty.

For generations the British embassies and legations have been the best informed, and they have been cultivated by American newspapermen. What is more they have been aggressive in protecting their own correspondents.

Shortly before the new war, for instance, Nazi officials seized the passport of a British journalist, making it impossible for him to get about. A few hours later the British Ambassador made a formal call in Wilhelmstrasse. "Germany has seized a piece of British property," he informed the foreign office. Officials did not understand at first, but they soon did. The passport was returned. It did not happen again.

The American diplomats, usually political appointees with little experience and less information, were long more a hindrance than a help to our correspondents. This, however, is changing. With the encouragement of career men, sometimes still in lower posts, such as secretaries and attachés, our embassies

are better informed. They give more accurate reports to Washington and valuable information to American correspondents.

After gathering the facts under dictatorships the correspondent still faces the problem of getting the news out of the country. This is not a difficult problem. The experienced correspondent finds a way of doing it. Here American ingenuity and enterprise have had full play. There are probably as many different ways of getting the news to the American press as there are American correspondents working in the foreign field. What is more, each foreign editor in the home office has his own technique.

While there are many kinds of censorships, they all come under two wide classifications: prior censorship, under which the correspondent must submit his dispatch to the censor before filing it; and post censorship, under which the correspondent may write what he wishes but is held personally responsible for every word in his dispatch. Apart from the fact that the latter helps to speed the dispatch to his newspaper, there is not much to choose between them. Under prior censorship the correspondent may attempt to send news that he knows is on the borderline, and at times discuss it with the censor, often getting it through with some minor changes. Once his dispatch is approved by the censor, however, his responsibility ends. Under post censorship, he will have to play safe and not attempt to send news that will get him into difficulty with the authorities.

In May, 1939, shortly after Premier Vyacheslaff Molotoff took over the conduct of Russia's foreign affairs from Maxim M. Litvinoff, the Soviet government switched from prior to post censorship. In doing so, Molotoff informed correspondents:

But I must warn you that if subsequent examination of a published message shows that the message was obviously hostile to the Soviet Union or injurious to its prestige, the Soviet Government without delay will deprive such correspondent of his right to stay within the borders of the Soviet Union.

Writing of this change, Harold Denny of *The New York Times* commented:

Sometimes censors have been of positive help. Often when a writer had a story he could not confirm he sent it to the censor. If the censor passed it he (the writer) knew it was true.

In making the change Molotoff was adopting the methods of the German Ministry of Propaganda, which had employed post censorship effectively for years. Under the German method the news is controlled at the source, and the correspondent is allowed to obtain only what can be safely sent to his newspaper. With post censorship the news value of the dispatch is no better than the courage, resourcefulness, and integrity of the correspondent. Germany has not hesitated to expel correspondents and to heap them with contumely.

Post censorship did not work so well in Russia, neither for the correspondents nor for the Soviet authorities. With the Hitler-Stalin alliance, the partition of Poland, and the invasion of Finland, Moscow found itself the center of international news interest, and the Government did not like the tone nor the substance of many news dispatches. While still making a show of liberality, the Soviet authorities tried different methods of circumventing the foreign newspapermen. They issued important communiqués at 3 A.M. (Moscow time), usually through the Tass Agency, the official news service, which was not available to all the correspondents. When the correspondents subscribed to the Tass service and remained awake for the communiqués, the Government sent its announcements direct to the home offices of the Associated Press and the United Press in New York and to other news services elsewhere, thus getting its news into American and other newspapers without the interpretation and comment of the well-informed Moscow correspondents. Finally on December 29, 1939, Russia ended the subterfuge and restored prior censorship.

With the return of the old censorship, however, came the

announcement that the censors would work only from 10 A.M. until 1 A.M. This presented a new problem for the American correspondents. The seven hours' difference in time between Moscow and New York hitherto enabled them to get the late night news into the American morning newspapers. Now they had to have their dispatches approved before 1 A.M. Moscow time, 6 P.M. New York time. With much of the important news still being released after this hour they had difficulty in dealing with it and in most cases could not do so until twenty-four hours later, when it was old news. At this writing, however, the censorship applies only to telegraph dispatches, and the Russian telephone, slow and inadequate, is still available to correspondents.

Where an American newspaper maintains a permanent bureau in a foreign capital, the chief correspondent is scrupulously careful in maintaining proper relations with the censor and the authorities, for he must keep his bureau open. The normal flow of spot news is sent out directly by wireless or cable or over the telephone to a central news office, in peacetime usually in London or Paris—since the beginning of the present war some news organizations have been using Amsterdam. Most American news organizations favor the central bureau. It is more economical and allows a chief correspondent to supervise the whole European "file." In each case, however, a copy of the original story is kept for presentation to the local censor's office. While stories are being telephoned to the central office, one of the censor's minions usually listens in and sometimes interrupts the flow of news, either to stop the story or to demand changes. The censor watches the correspondent's newspaper. In any event, and perhaps merely to show his authority, the censor makes numerous protests and delivers many rebukes to the correspondent.

The permanent bureau deals largely with "spot" news, that is, the incidents of the day and the reaction to world events, as officially disclosed or printed in the local press. Its stories quote liberally from official statements, speeches, handouts, and

the approved press, supplying background to bring out their significance. Its writers are careful to reveal their sources and to tie the news to them. They do not give such news on their own responsibility, unless they have been eyewitnesses to the event. Where possible and when necessary they indicate their own doubts of its accuracy. There is never any difficulty with the transmission of such news. What is more, the informed foreign editor in the home office may add further background—under a dash to indicate that it is not part of the dispatch—to make the situation completely clear.

The problem is to get out information that the dictatorship and its censorship has tried to conceal or has barred. Every intelligent correspondent knows more than he includes in his regular dispatches. Much of this he senses, although he cannot prove it so. Much of it would make him *persona non grata* with the government he is covering. Things are rarely what the propagandists would have them. The demi-god usually has feet of clay. There are dissident elements despite the much-vaunted unanimity. The great demonstration was manufactured to order. The men doing the cheering have empty stomachs. The success of the various five- and four-year plans is predicated on exploitation of the workers. The new culture is what Tolstoy called a lily on a manure heap.

Codes are sometimes used to get the news out, but never in a way to be obvious. In some cases the story is sent out with substitute names; a story from Berlin may purport to deal with conditions in Russia with a liberal sprinkling of Russian names of persons and places. The censor passes it. The foreign editor replaces the equivalent German names, and prints the forbidden information. In other instances a long dispatch on routine matters may have vital information in its tail. The foreign editor spots it, turns the story upside down, and displays it on page one. The censor sees all this on reading the newspaper, but the correspondent can blame his editors.

A few correspondents go right ahead and send the news re-

gardless of the censor, daring his wrath. They defend themselves as best they can, explaining that they send the facts as they find them and offering to make corrections when proved wrong. The most notable case of this kind was Frederick T. Birchall's coverage of the inception of the Hitler regime. He sent out the exact truth when other correspondents were pussy-footing, and won the Pulitzer prize for his efforts.

The correspondent, himself, may cross the frontier and write his stories in the free air of one of the democracies. This was done at the time of the assassination of Chancellor Dollfuss of Austria. The correspondents rushed into Czechoslovakia to file their stories. Or the correspondent may take a vacation, and write a series of articles on conditions at his post. This was done by Webb Miller of the United Press and Harold Denny of *The New York Times*, both of whom were stationed in Moscow. The correspondent's re-entry may then be delayed or denied. This hurts the newspaper, for it loses that man's competence and experience. The newspaper may protect the correspondent by not using his by-line.

Another way, and the safest, is to have a capable man visit the bureau. There he quickly gets all the forbidden information the bureau has gathered, observes conditions, meets leading officials, sometimes the dictator himself, and then departs with a memory well stocked with suppressed news. Safely out, he writes what dispatches may be necessary, perhaps several articles, and informs his editors of the true situation.

The civil war in Spain offered a good test of gathering news under censorship. At the start the correspondents on each side were allowed to see only what the rival commanders wanted them to see and to send only what the censorship would allow to go on the cables. Each side had active propagandists. Each side issued communiqués on which news stories were supposed to be based. Each side colored news of events to suit its purpose. There was not so much difficulty with "spot" news, that is, reports of battles won or lost, or advances or retreats, although

each side minimized or exaggerated as suited the occasion; the difficulty came with any attempt to deal with the larger appraisal of the situation and the underlying political and international situation.

Early in the war it was suspected that Germany and Italy were helping General Franco, and Russia and France the Loyalists, creating a condition charged with danger for the whole world. Efforts were made to conceal this participation from the correspondents. Then Frank L. Kluckhohn and other correspondents got evidence of the Italian and German assistance to Franco. All of them were "detained" except Kluckhohn, who at the risk of his life crossed into Portugal and sent the facts to America. He did not dare go back. He was transferred to Mexico, only to be expelled from there for displeasing the Cardenas regime. On the other side William P. Carney, in Madrid, got the truth about Communist co-operation. He took a "vacation" in Paris and from there sent the truth to America. He, too, could not go back. He was transferred to the Franco side and has since been generously denounced by Communists both in Spain and in America. Other correspondents later confirmed the accuracy of these dispatches, and this ended the attempt at disguising the nature of the Spanish situation.

Of all the free democratic news centers London is probably the best for the American correspondent in peacetime. The London press is active and courageous. It goes after the news aggressively, using the telephone to get the daily news in each of the capitals of Europe, and sometimes even in the Americas. It is backed up by the prestige of the British Empire and an informed and competent foreign office. The British people want correct information, and the press usually gets it for them. The diverse interests and wide ramifications of the Empire give London a rôle in most international dramas—in many the leading rôle. It knows what is going on in the world, and it is one of the choice watchtowers for the American press.

The British press and of course the American correspondents

have not the direct contact with the Premier and cabinet ministers that correspondents have with the President and departments in Washington. There are foreign office conferences with the press, and much of the important news of the Empire comes out in the Question Hour in the Commons, which is the British equivalent of the semi-weekly press conferences at the White House. Yet there the reply to a question may be: "The reply to my honorable friend is in the negative." Most ministers pride themselves on their reserve. The London reporters, however, do get the news, and print it.

The American correspondent almost always works in co-operation with one of the London newspapers and sometimes has a paid London informant as well. The latter will probably be the foreign editor or parliamentary correspondent of one of the newspapers, a man of valuable news connections and many official friends. He can get the news when others cannot, and he tips off his American correspondent to what is going on behind the scenes. The latter then writes his dispatches, reflecting informed British opinion and adding what facts he has gleaned himself.

The American press, on occasion, has printed better-informed news of British events than was available to the British public. This was true of the constitutional crisis culminating in the abdication of Edward VIII and in the crisis in foreign policy which resulted in the resignation of Anthony Eden as foreign minister. In both these cases the American correspondents got the facts from London informants, who in turn got them from cabinet ministers. The London press in these cases imposed censorship upon itself, in the first because the royal family is sacrosanct, and in the second because of a delicate international situation that might well have tragic consequences. But in both cases the British newspapers knew what was going on.

In normal times the news situation in Paris, Copenhagen, The Hague, Stockholm, Cairo, and Buenos Aires is much the

same. These capitals present no difficulties. The news is available and the American correspondents send it.

Until recently one of the most interesting and one of the best news centers was the League of Nations at Geneva. The League and also the International Labor Office learned early that world opinion was their most powerful weapon, if not their only weapon. Both provided splendid facilities for the press, that of the League being probably the best in the world. Here for two decades prime ministers, foreign ministers, ambassadors, labor leaders, and all manner of experts gathered by the dozen. The "big shot" in Paris or Moscow was just another delegate at Geneva. He and his colleagues were thrown in with the press in the League lobbies, both before and after sessions, in hotel lobbies and rooms, and at luncheons, dinners, and all kinds of social functions. He soon made many news friends. He found his colleagues discussing events freely with the press, frequently consulting correspondents on affairs in their countries or exchanging ideas on world conditions, and he ended by doing likewise. Correspondents accredited to the League often got information that was not available in the delegates' capitals, and they had ready facilities to get it to the American press without benefit of censors. The League's recent loss of prestige has curtailed this news source.

Similar conditions prevailed at the gatherings of the world bankers and financial experts for the meetings of the Bank for International Settlements at Basel. This is one of the best spots to appraise financial and business conditions. Even Montagu Norman, governor of the Bank of England, who is never available to the press elsewhere, not even in London, will with proper discretion discuss conditions when in Basel, although his name may not appear in the resulting dispatches. Other bankers and experts are free with the press, but not for direct quotation.

News conditions under the censorships in some of the capitals in South America and in Shanghai and Tokyo parallel those

under the dictatorships in Europe. In fact they model themselves after them.

Even before the undeclared war the Chinese imposed a censorship, a rather stupid one, that served more to delay the work of the correspondents than to prevent their getting the news to their newspapers. The control was always lax, although the Nanking government tried at various times to deny communication facilities to individual American correspondents.

As for Japan, a typically efficient control is maintained over every word printed in the domestic press, and great efforts are made to control the output of the foreign correspondents. The government has tried persistently to prescribe the thoughts of the people and to control world opinion. It is nervous at all times, and can throw a fit over an ingenuous American tourist making a snapshot of a scene that can be bought on postcards in half the shops of Tokyo. The correspondent in Japan must move warily at all times.

The start of the new war in Europe in September, 1939, brought many new and sudden problems to American correspondents and to American editors. Their whole system of gathering news in Europe was thrown into confusion. The worst situation developed in London, where censors, without warning, walked into communications offices and took command. At the same time a strict censorship was applied to news gathered in Britain. Normally much of the news of other capitals of Europe was transmitted through London, usually reaching there by telephone. Free use of the telephones was at once stopped, and all dispatches for America submitted to British censorship. Routine news was delayed five hours and more. Code words were barred, even code addresses. Official business used up much of the facilities of the communications companies, and all "urgent" and "full-rate" messages were refused, preventing correspondents from expediting their stories. News from Moscow, Berlin, Rome, and elsewhere had to be rerouted, some through Copenhagen and Amsterdam and some direct to New

York. Similar conditions, but less exasperating, prevailed in Paris.

Berlin and Moscow meanwhile seemed to ease the restrictions on the American correspondents. Paradoxically, and for the first time in years, it was easier to get news from the dictator countries than from the democracies. Britain and France, less experienced in propaganda and censorship, were applying new and untried methods, while the dictator countries were using a well-organized and experienced machine.

Further confusion in American newspaper offices was caused by the nature of the news received. Information from the various fronts was available only in official communiqués. Correspondents were not allowed into the battle zones for weeks. French communiqués, especially, were brief and colorless. Often the news in the French or British communiqué would contradict that in the German communiqué. There was no way of checking back on them. The same was true of much of the other news, the British and the Germans contradicting each other on many important stories, such as the sinking of the S.S. *Athenia*, with many Americans aboard, the alleged damaging of the battle cruiser *Repulse* and the airplane carrier *Ark Royal*, and the British airplane raid on Wilhelmshaven. The explanatory captions for news pictures were sometimes so distorted as to amount to faking.

Both sides resorted to the radio, with the result that American newspapers and news services had to have reporters listening in to all the European broadcasts and had to install machines to take statements off the air. With long delays in cable and wireless communications, the radio for weeks had much the better of it. All communiqués were included in the official broadcasts, as were other important texts and announcements. The news of the sinking of the *Athenia* reached America first by radio, the radio broadcast being instantaneous, while news dispatches were held up in the censor's office in London. For

two weeks the radio broadcasts from Warsaw were the only information that American newspapers had from that beleaguered capital.

Most American newspapers took occasion to warn their readers that all the news they were printing of the struggle in Europe was subject to censorship. Some ran boxes on page one, others inside, and some explained the situation in editorials or news stories. All American news editors treated the news carefully, realizing the effect of the censorship and the impact of propaganda.

It is a consolation for American newspaper readers to know, however, that they received the best information available at the time of publication, and that when further facts became available they received them also. No other reading public got so much information, and information that was so carefully scrutinized. American newspapers did an outstanding job on the war from the first, and while there was much of the news that was contradictory and much that was doubtless wrong in details, the major facts were given to the American readers. The obliteration of Poland, the effectiveness of the British blockade, the landing of British troops in France, the mobilization of Russia and its entry into Poland, the strategy of the French on the West Front, the partition of Poland, all were quickly reported in America. So also were stories like the sinking of the *Athenia*, the *Courageous*, and the *Royal Oak*, the airplane attacks on various parts of Britain, the Russian negotiations with the Baltic states, the signing of the treaty between Turkey and Britain and France. The censors, anxious to prevent the publication of information that might help or encourage their enemies and anxious to give their own countries the best of it, concentrated mostly on detail, allowing the major news to get through. Ultimately the truth gets across all borders, and when it does the American press has it.

Not only is an adequate foreign service a major news problem

for the American newspaper, it is also an expensive one. Despite the reduction in rates in the past generation, cable and wireless rates are still costly. The normal press rate by cable from London and Paris is five cents a word; from Moscow twelve cents; from Tokyo thirteen cents; from Shanghai ten cents; from Manila twelve cents; and from Honolulu seven cents. Often it may be necessary to send dispatches at full rate to catch editions, and then the cost is greatly increased. The full rate from Moscow is thirty cents a word; from Tokyo fifty-nine cents; from Shanghai seventy-three cents; from Manila fifty-three cents, and from Honolulu twenty cents. A column story from Shanghai at press rates would thus cost about \$100 and at full rate about \$700, not to mention the expense of maintaining the bureau and of paying the salaries of the correspondents and their working expenses.

Newspapers save cost on cable and wireless news by using "cablese," a form of writing that omits punctuation (which must be paid for) and unnecessary words and condenses many phrases. The correspondent starts with the subject of his sentence and proceeds directly to his predicate and object, avoiding all circumlocutions and parenthetical phrases. The sentence "Adolf Hitler did not visit the annual Wagnerian festival at Bayreuth last year" becomes "Hitler unvisited Bayreuth festival yesterday," reducing a thirteen-word sentence to five words and cutting the cable cost proportionately. Correspondents and their editors are adept at such cable forms, the latter filling them out in the home offices without difficulty and with complete assurance of their accuracy.

But regardless of the cost or effort involved, the American press gets the news and prints it. With more and more dictatorship and more and more censors, the news picture is not bright. It seems incredible in this enlightened twentieth century of ours; but there it is. We in the United States are fortunate in a free and informed press which presents daily an honest ac-

count of affairs. News was never more important, and never more difficult to gather. What we know of world-affairs—and it is not a little—we can credit to aggressive and intelligent correspondents in the news capitals of the world and to editors forever on the alert and never accepting defeat.

IX. Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON has always been one of our most important American news centers. It became more important than ever under the New Deal. Every move by the President, by the Congress, by the Supreme Court, and by the scores of departments, commissions, and bureaus touches the lives of many citizens. The men on relief, the farmer, the worker, the banker, the businessman, all look to the federal government, some in hope, some in trepidation. All must keep informed on what is happening in the national capital. All depend on the American press for complete and accurate information.

The stream of news flowing from Washington is as wide and as turbulent as life itself. It ranges from the details of the latest battleship or the demands of sit-down strikers in Detroit to the housing of Negroes in Harlem or the newest recipe for pickling cucumbers. The aspirations and the difficulties of every group of Americans, no matter how lowly, ultimately reach the national capital. The problems of business, of the trade unions, of agriculture come up for discussion and action. America's relations with the modern world are at all times a matter of grave concern. For each problem the federal government must offer something in palliation or solution. The press follows the battle of rival propagandas, the conflict of interests, and covers every move from the presentation of the problem to the ultimate action on it. It sees all; it hears all; it reports everything.

Some of the best reporting, and also some of the worst, is done by the Washington press corps. The national capital is at

once one of the easiest and one of the hardest of reporting assignments—depending on how the correspondent goes about it.

The correspondent who believes all he is told will find it easy, for nowhere is news more available. All official Washington from the President down is conscious of the great voting public. There is always an election in the offing. Mass interviews, speeches, statements, and “handouts” are employed to keep this public informed through the press. Millions of words are poured out yearly, all of them aimed at a favorable presentation of the activities of the government. There is rarely a gnat in this bog of salve.

For the correspondent who wants to determine the exact truth, however, it is not so easy. The man who wants to go beyond the handout, who wants to question the glib information of the official, who wants the unadorned facts and not political palaver, must bring industry and high intelligence to his task. Things are not always what they seem, not even in our free democracy.

All the leading American newspapers maintain bureaus in the national capital to supplement the coverage of the news services. The *Congressional Directory* for the third session of the Seventy-fifth Congress listed twenty reporters for *The New York Times* in the press galleries of the House and Senate, fourteen for the *Wall Street Journal*, twelve for the Scripps-Howard Alliance, eight for the New York *Herald Tribune*, six for the Chicago *Tribune*, and five each for the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, the Houston *Chronicle*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and the Baltimore *Sun*. Many other newspapers have one or two men. Eighty-eight men were listed for the Associated Press, twenty-nine for the United Press, and twenty for the International News Service.

The larger metropolitan newspapers cover most or all of the important Washington news first hand with their own men and depend on the press services only for minor or routine stories. The reason for this is evident. The press services, operating on a national or regional basis and supplying news for hundreds

of newspapers of differing interests and requirements, must of necessity confine their output to a bare recital of the facts. On major events they will expand somewhat, but to stories of purely local interest they can give but a scant paragraph or two. The larger newspapers, those that go after the big news in a big way, will want every detail and angle and will want the full background of the event and of the personalities concerned. They have the space for such news, and their readers expect no less. Such coverage would swamp the news services.

What is more, they will want the stories written according to their own news interest. They must consider their readers at all times. A story, for instance, about the efficiency of the navy will be of much greater interest in New York or Los Angeles than it is in Kansas City or St. Louis, while one on soil conservation will be of major importance to the latter and only of passing interest to the former. The newspaper in Detroit will be interested in moves to outlaw the sit-down strike, that in Tulsa in "hot" oil control, that in Birmingham in antilynching legislation, that in Boston in the tariff on textiles. It all depends on whose ox is gored. The newspaper read in Wall Street will cover and feature all news of the Treasury, of the SEC, of the RFC, and the fiscal policies of the government. Republican newspapers, like the New York *Herald Tribune* and the Boston *Herald*, will provide full coverage on all attacks on the Democratic administration.

Newspapers with only one or two men in the national capital will employ them to supplement the news services. They will want coverage on the activities of their senators and representatives and on all legislation affecting their community. They may use the Associated Press or the United Press on the "spot" news and with it run a story by their special correspondent giving its significance, its background, and how it came about. The newspaper in Des Moines, for instance, will have a correspondent watching all changes in agricultural policies. The newspaper in San Francisco will want full details on Oriental immigration

policies. The newspaper in Boston will have a man watching variations in the tariff that might affect New England industries. They want their own stories on matters that involve the interests of their own readers, each covered by a specialist in this particular subject.

Washington news requires expert treatment. There was a time when the Washington correspondent could get by with a knowledge of politics and politicians, and no more. The dealings of the government with labor, with social security, with housing, with relief, with CCC camps, with share croppers, and with a hundred other phases of life, demand the services of reporters with the background and the knowledge of conditions to make news of these problems intelligible to readers. The same is true of the activities of the Treasury, with its control of currency, gold, and credit; of the Interstate Commerce Commission with its regulation of railroads; of the Department of Justice with its efforts to smash monopolies and enforce federal laws; of the State Department and its relations with other nations and its negotiation of treaties of commerce or amity; of the Army and Navy Departments with their responsibility for the national defense; of the SEC with its regulation of stock exchanges, of speculation, and of the flow of capital into industry; of the Department of Agriculture with its regimentation of the farmer and its control of crops and crop surpluses; of a score or more of other departments, commissions, and bureaus which deal with as many other phases of American life. Then there is the Congress, itself, whose deliberations embrace all human activities from taxes to lynching, and the Supreme Court, whose rulings cover the full range of American law and governmental activity. Finally into all these varied problems enter politics, the imponderable ingredient, to color the ultimate decision, often to determine it.

The Washington bureau operates under the immediate direction of the chief correspondent, who sets its standards, fixes its editorial tone, and determines its news coverage. Frequently he

is assisted by an office manager, who functions much like a city editor. The chief correspondent, who should be a man of wide knowledge, sound judgment, and long experience, must be able to see the full news picture. Often he does the most important news story himself, or he may confine himself to a semieditorial interpretation of it. Sometimes he may do both or embody both in one story. He also keeps the editors in the home office and the publisher informed on the political and economic significance of events in the capital. His office manager assigns the staff and sometimes reads copy on its output.

Not so long ago Washington reporters were assigned to news posts, such as the Senate, the House, the Treasury, the White House, and each was held responsible for full coverage of the news originating at his post. The complexity of the present news budget has made this impossible. Now most men are assigned to one story, or subject, and follow it through to its ultimate conclusion, no matter where it may lead. Men are still assigned to the major news posts—certain spots must be covered at all times—but they may be relieved any day to follow one story through.

If the administration decides, for instance, on revision of the tax laws one man will be assigned to cover the entire procedure. He will start with the deliberations and the hearings of the Ways and Means Committee, cover its report to the House and the debate and the vote in the House, and then go with the bill before the Finance Committee, the Senate, the meetings of the House and Senate conferees, recording the action on the conference report in both chambers, and through to the final approval or veto by the President. An expert on taxation to begin with, this man obviously will have intimate and firsthand information about the bill and how it came to be what it is. He will be able to write of it with authority and understanding—and perhaps some cynicism.

The President and the Congress are still the greatest sources of news in Washington, although others have come to the front

in recent years. Among these sources the most important are the Treasury and other financial agencies, such as the Federal Reserve Board, the RFC, and the SEC, although they have close competition from other departments and organizations that have led the New Deal revolution in social and economic conditions. There are a score of these, and they must be covered daily. So also must the other important departments, the Navy, War, Interior, Commerce, and State. There has never been any accurate count of the number of governmental commissions, bureaus, organizations, and corporations in the national capital. Figures differ according to the manner of counting. Certainly there are plenty. All have their functions, some duplicating the others, but all can make news.

Nor is this all. Washington is the center of many other news-making activities. Here naturally gravitate all organizations and groups having business with or trying to influence the government. They are too numerous to list, but they include the American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, the National Woman's Party, scores of pressure groups with their propaganda-disseminating machines, scores more of lobbyists with as many selfish interests to serve, and the headquarters of the major political parties. Here also are the Pan-American Union, the Smithsonian Institution, the Carnegie Foundation, the Folger Shakespeare Library, and many other significant and worthy organizations. Finally we have the dozens of embassies and legations, each representing a nation with relations with our government, and the birthplace of many of our citizens. They, too, have their interests to serve, social and diplomatic, and are not above trying to influence public opinion as well as the government when their own countries are in time of crisis. The news possibilities of Washington are almost limitless.

Washington differs from the other major capitals of the world in its frank recognition of the rôle of a free press in government, and in its efforts to keep the press informed. In

no other capital is it possible for correspondents to discuss policies so freely with ranking executives. Nowhere else do high officials hold regular conferences with the press. Nowhere else can the correspondent mix on such terms of intimacy with legislators and government leaders.

The mass interview with the press is an old Washington custom. These conferences are held regularly by all high officials, from the President down. Those at the White House are held twice weekly, one in the morning, usually on Tuesdays, timed for the afternoon newspapers, and one in the afternoon, usually on Fridays, timed for the morning newspapers. Others are held at other times as important news warrants. And on occasion one may be cancelled. The Secretaries of the Treasury and of the Interior generally hold conferences semi-weekly; the Secretary of State daily; the Secretary of Labor weekly; and other secretaries and officials may vary their conferences to suit their convenience or the news.

Any accredited correspondent or reporter may attend any one of these conferences, regardless of the political complexion of the newspaper he represents. As many as two hundred attend the gatherings at the White House. Others are patronized according to their news value. Naturally the meetings with the President are the most important. They set the keynote for the others.

Any reporter can ask any question he chooses at these interviews—within the bounds of decency. The official can word his reply to suit himself, sometimes giving a detailed explanation, sometimes evading a direct answer, and sometimes resorting to an “off the record” response that may tell the questioner much or little but effectively binds all present to secrecy.

Before Theodore Roosevelt the coverage of the White House was largely a hit-or-miss affair, the President making his policies known through messages to Congress, speeches, formal statements, and letters to friends. Roosevelt really started intimate firsthand relations with the press. He used the corre-

spondents to dramatize his vigorous policies and equally vigorous personality. It was he who first set aside a room at the White House for the reporters, but he played favorites and went so far as to bar a newspaperman from his news sources or to condemn him to his "Ananias Club" when he did not like a story or the reaction to it, even if the story was factually correct. President Taft attempted weekly conferences, but he caused resentment by favoring the correspondent of his brother's newspaper. For a time his relations with the press corps were congenial, but later, especially during his row with Roosevelt, he was much less cordial, probably feeling that the correspondents sided with his more colorful and more popular rival. It was Woodrow Wilson who originated semi-weekly mass interviews at the White House. He expected the press to serve as a liaison between him and the public, but his own lack of frankness, his frequent resentment over adverse criticism, and his schoolmasterly attitude alienated many correspondents, although others maintained cordial relations with him to the end. The semi-weekly conferences continued for about two years, then ceased. During the war and the Senate fight over the peace treaty his secretary, Joseph Tumulty, was the major source of White House news.

The success or failure of the White House relations with the press has turned largely on the personality of the President and on how he has tried to use the correspondents.

President Harding, a newspaperman himself, was friendly, free and easy. He was liked as a man, but after correspondents discovered his lack of understanding of pressing problems, few of them had much respect for him as a President. He revived the biweekly conferences, but after several more or less disastrous mistakes he would only answer written questions submitted in advance. He could not weather the give and take of the free conference.

President Coolidge had a real or feigned aversion towards publicity, and Garbo-like got more than he would have other-

wise. He continued the conferences and the written questions. All Presidents object to being quoted directly without express permission, but he even objected to being quoted indirectly. This resulted in the strange fiction of the "White House spokesman," which fooled no one but the President himself. He managed nevertheless to maintain a "good press." In an era of expanding credit and rising stocks and fantastic economics he presented a picture of New England frugality and simplicity. Doing nothing, he gave little room for criticism in a nation bent on profits.

President Hoover started well and finished poorly. He entered office with many friends among the press corps and finished up with few. As the depression became more severe he became more irritable. He demanded questions in advance and sometimes would deny receiving them. The correspondents would troop sadly into his conferences, listen to him read an announcement, then some background material, and walk out again. Rarely was a question asked, for the correspondents felt that he resented questioning. Towards the end he tried to function without benefit of the press, and this led to a formal protest. The hostility of the correspondents probably had much to do with his overwhelming defeat.

Franklin D. Roosevelt brought the press conference to its ultimate perfection, especially in his first term. He had an abundance of important news to give out and enjoyed doing it. With his cigarette holder at a saucy angle, a ready smile, and a hearty greeting, hailing many of the correspondents by their first names, he reveled in the quick repartee of the mass interview. He displayed a fine feeling for news values and for dramatic effects. He took the questions as they came and answered them with apparent frankness. He did on occasion adroitly turn aside an embarrassing question or with a facetious reply turn the laughter against the offending reporter. His conferences were relished by all—well, nearly all.

He particularly enjoyed confounding the correspondents by announcements that upset their printed predictions or took them

by surprise. This got him into trouble on the Supreme Court issue. His dramatic and surprising announcement took the reporters unawares and upset all their "dope." He was delighted with himself, but it also took the country unawares and shocked a large part of it. One of the major functions of the press in a democracy is to act as a cushion for unpleasant news. On this occasion it did not. Had there been a few "leaks," public opinion might have been expressed on it. The President would have known what kind of reaction to expect. He could then have modified his plan and avoided much of the criticism heaped upon him. As it was he did his compromising too late and went down to his first major defeat.

There are other ways of getting news out of the White House. The President's secretaries not infrequently pass along information to correspondents, formally or informally, or "tip off" a news friend. Then there are the visitors. The political leader, the banker, the diplomat, or the industrialist who has had a conference with the President is set upon by the White House reporters immediately afterwards and is usually forced to disgorge something of what went on. The private interview with the President is rare. Franklin D. Roosevelt, at this writing, has given only one private interview, that to Arthur Krock, for which the latter won the Pulitzer prize, and for which the President apologized at the next regular conference.

There is not much that the President is doing or planning to do that goes unreported. Much of this news, while thoroughly authentic, is credited to "circles close to the White House," or to a "high authority," or to some other equally vague source.

Sometimes it may be a trial balloon. The President, contemplating some important action, is concerned over the public reaction. Information on what is in the President's mind is passed on to one or more correspondents, who print it knowing that it is correct but will be denied or qualified if the public reaction is unfavorable. This frequently happens on appointments to important posts. Hints that a certain gentleman is being consid-

ered as ambassador to an important foreign capital or some other post are given in the press. Within twenty-four hours the administration has not only the sentiment of the United States but also of the foreign nation. Trial balloons usually come from members of the "Palace Guard."

Even under Franklin D. Roosevelt there are some restrictions on reporting the President. He must not be quoted directly, without permission. His statements must be paraphrased. The background material he supplies cannot be attributed to him in any form. Then he sometimes takes refuge in "off the record" explanations. The latter occurred more frequently in his second term, as his policies met more criticism throughout the country.

"Off the record" statements put the correspondent at a distinct disadvantage. He is bound by professional ethics and procedure to respect the President's confidence. He asks his question and the President makes his qualification. He has no time to absent himself from the room—usually the room is locked—and he cannot protest. The prestige of the presidency overawes even the most experienced correspondent and of itself puts him at a disadvantage. Mr. Roosevelt likes the going when it is pleasant, but objects to "cross-examination" when it is not so pleasant. He never, however, terminates his press conferences. He waits for one of the correspondents to say "Thank you, Mr. President," whereupon the mass interview is over and the reporters depart.

The ascendancy of the Franklin D. Roosevelts brought another novelty to White House coverage—mass interviews by the wife of the President. Like it or not, Mrs. Roosevelt has made herself a part of official Washington, and she is definitely news. She holds regular mass interviews, in which she reveals her own plans and discusses subjects and events of interest to women. She limits these informal and pleasant gatherings to women reporters, and to date no man is on record as having attempted to crash one of them. As a result many newspapers

not previously so equipped had to have at least one woman reporter on their Washington staffs.

Next to the press conference in presenting the administration's viewpoint to the public comes the handout. Every bureau and every correspondent is overwhelmed with the steady flood of press releases from governmental agencies, not to mention those from lobbyists, pressure groups, and other interests. Many of these are of vital news interest, the texts of speeches, reports on governmental activities, etc., but many more are simply political propaganda. Nearly all are accurate as to details, so far as they go, but naturally they array their facts to make a favorable impression for the department or agency issuing them. The government in office never suffers from the handouts issued by its employees.

Practically all of these handouts are the handicraft of experienced newspapermen, who know how to marshal their facts and how to write a story, and who are functioning in the administration under some other guise. There is a law dating from October 12, 1913, prohibiting the employment of governmental press agents as such, but that does not bar the employment of a newspaperman in some other official capacity. How many newspapermen actually are functioning in the administration is not definitely known—there has been no acceptable count of them—but J. Parnell Thomas, Republican representative from New Jersey, charged in the House, on March 8, 1938, that there were 270 federal employees in Washington engaged in publicity. The output is enormous.

The handout is a simple and cheap way of getting an issue before the correspondents, and perhaps through them into the press of the nation. All it requires is a press agent, a mimeograph, and a messenger boy. When Washington is at its news peak, with Congress in session, as many as a hundred handouts may find their way daily to the correspondent's desk. There is no obligation to use them, but there they lie. Someone in the bureau must look them over, for any one may contain the mak-

ings of a good story. If the bureau is short staffed and overworked there will be the temptation to use some of this material without investigation. Or the editor in the home office may send a sharp message about some story a rival newspaper is displaying, and the harassed correspondent will turn to the handout, which gave it birth. It makes for careless, easy reporting.

While the Franklin D. Roosevelt administration did not originate the handout system it did give it new significance. The New Deal was conscious of the value of publicity and propaganda from the start. It left nothing undone to win public support for its policies. Like most preceding administrations it tried to control the news at the source, and to this extent circumvent freedom of the press. Open censorship has never been tried in Washington, excepting a voluntary censorship accepted by the press during the World War. The government in office, however, always colors the news, for it not only makes the news, it gives most of it to the press—and according to its own viewpoint. The correspondent who shows hostility to the government in his writing soon finds the atmosphere chilly. His more tractable rivals get beats, a pat on the back, and interesting social invitations.

Franklin D. Roosevelt in his efforts to control news went so far as to suggest a Central Information Bureau, which would serve as a clearinghouse for all Washington news. It was incorporated in his Governmental Reorganization Bill as originally drafted. The press corps made such a howl that it died a sudden death. To the correspondents it meant censorship and suggested a ministry of propaganda. They demanded continued access to the sources of the news. They still have it. It is not easy to put things over on the press corps. It contains many experienced and competent men who have seen presidents come and presidents go. They understand the weaknesses as well as the strength of our American form of government. One president may be more adroit and more crafty in his relations with the press than another; but in the long run each gets what is com-

ing to him, and the nation gets a true picture of his administration.

More insidious and more difficult to deal with is the propaganda of the lobbyist and the pressure groups. There is scarcely an industry, a pressure group, selfish or otherwise, or an organization that has dealings with the government that has not its lobbyist or its bureau in the national capital. These work on both the press and the legislators, and their approach to each is much the same. They pass out their handouts and other literature, colored to suit their purposes. They bring pressure of all sorts on members of the Congress, and these in turn may make speeches or statements that cannot be ignored by the press; when Congress acts the press reports it. They attempt to ingratiate themselves with individual correspondents. Sometimes these lobbyists are former newspapermen or former members of the Congress with many personal friends in the press corps.

Many lobbyists maintain homes or offices equipped for elaborate entertainment and have ample expense accounts for this purpose. Some keep open house, and their food and their liquors are of the best. Here the correspondent will meet members of the Congress, high officials, important visitors to Washington, and fellow-workers. There is an atmosphere of good-fellowship and conviviality. There is no mention of the lobbyist's special interest; but some time later the lobbyist may call the correspondent's attention to an "important" bill among the hundreds before the Congress, and his handouts will inevitably get just a little more attention.

Then the new or inexperienced correspondent in the capital may have a wife with social aspirations or marriageable daughters. Washington without an invitation is a cold city. Just about the time the correspondent's womenfolk are beginning to regret their transfer to Washington, a very charming lady calls, or telephones, to suggest that the wife might enjoy an invitation that would enable her to meet many Washington matrons or the daughters to meet the younger set. She is the lobbyist's wife.

The ladies are introduced into Washington society, perhaps only the outer fringe, but the correspondent's ladies are eternally grateful. Life takes on a new interest for them, and the lobbyist's cause has another press friend.

Washington takes its society seriously. With its bounteous crop of diplomats, politicians, military and naval figures, and visiting statesmen, it is probably the most colorful and interesting society in America. There is still much leaving of cards, bowing from the hips, and kissing of hands. There is a constant round of cocktail parties, receptions, dinners, and balls. There is an equally constant flow of gossip, and all of it is about official life, turning on the figures who make events and the policies of the government. The active correspondent must wear his dress suit often, and with ease and grace. He must have his line of small talk for the ladies, for a chivalrous compliment may bring a page-one story.

It is seldom, indeed, that anything of importance is done in official circles that is not discussed long in advance in social circles. The scene encourages it. Good food and good wine make a man satisfied with himself and the world. The congressional leader feels 100 per cent American, the military or naval officer feels like preening himself, and the ambassador feels more important than ever. The conversation is interesting—one owes it to one's hostess—and the tongue is not so discreet after the fifth champagne cocktail. A choice bit of gossip is welcome. One that surprises or shocks the other guests is stimulating to the ego. The more important hostesses pride themselves on their salons. They cultivate interesting and important people, including the leading correspondents. The affairs of the world are discussed at their tables, often by the people who direct America's policies, and always by people who know what it is all about.

The correspondent at these functions may get a chance to discuss things informally and intimately with the man who is making the news or about to do so. Or as a mere listener he may get his first intimation of things to come. In some cases a

fine point of professional ethics arises. A senator, for instance, may discuss vital legislation shortly to come before Congress. He may even tell of his conference with the President, which he refused to discuss with the reporters at the White House. Is the correspondent free to use such information? He is not there in disguise. The senator knows him. Yet it is a private, social gathering, and they are all guests. The correspondent will probably check up on the senator's disclosure on the morrow and write a piece around it, for if he does not use it, some other correspondent will be stumbling on it a day or two later and beating him to it. Once a correspondent knows for certain that an action is being contemplated, he will find a way to use the information. He will not, of course, disclose the source of his information if it is confidential.

The embassies and legations of foreign countries play the social game for all it is worth, both to obtain information and to project their viewpoints. With ample funds for entertainment, they help to make life interesting for correspondents along with other Washington residents. The caviar and champagne of the Russian Embassy, for instance, became famous both for their quantity and quality, while the storm over the invitations to the British Ambassador's garden party to the king and queen long will be remembered. Ambassadors and ministers are good news sources, even in normal times, and are cultivated as such, but they become still more valuable when their countries get involved in a major war. Correspondents realize, of course, that everything they do and say is colored by their national interests, but they are useful in explaining and amplifying the news. At the start of Hitler's war, for example, reporters could turn to the Polish Embassy for detailed maps, for the correct spelling of names of persons and places, and for the approximate pronunciation, while the Ambassador made available information on terrain, industrial centers, etc., and gave out communiqués and personal statements interpreting Polish events.

Shortly after the outbreak of the war President Roosevelt

urged extra caution on correspondents and newspapers in the publication of unsubstantiated news reports, as if that were necessary, adding the assurance that the White House and the State Department would be ready to help in determining the falsity or truth of such reports. Correspondents and editors welcomed the suggestion, being ready to accept assistance from any reliable source in what they knew would be a difficult task.

The first test of this co-operation came soon afterwards, and at night. Correspondents in Moscow, Stockholm, and Copenhagen reported pressure on the American government to intercede with the Soviet Union on behalf of Finland, which was preparing to resist Russian demands that it considered incompatible with its independence. Copenhagen went so far as to indicate that President Roosevelt had already acted. Something was in the air—that much was evident to news editors—but what could not be determined. American newspapers naturally turned to Washington for confirmation or clarification. Subsequent events proved that the reports from abroad were correct, but all the correspondents obtained was the well-known “run-around” at the White House and the State Department. American newspapers were forced to use stories of official action by their own government as reports from abroad. Later presidential and other official explanations did not mollify the correspondents.

Almost nothing of official importance is done in Washington without a “leak” to the press somewhere along the line. Too many people must know about it, and nearly all of them have newspaper friends. The junior or assistant executive in the department, who probably does most of the groundwork for the action for which the secretary or official is taking full credit and is a bit peeved about it, will drop a hint or pass a copy of a document to a correspondent whom he can trust. The member of the Senate or House Committee may do the same. Even executive sessions, pledged to secrecy, are reported in the press a few hours later. It is the recognized thing and causes no surprise.

The member of Congress and the leading officials are as anxious to get a "good press" as are correspondents to get good coverage of Washington. For this reason they are often mutually helpful. One will pass along news, and the other will go out of his way to give a "break" to his news source. One needs the other. They cultivate each other. In many cases a correspondent will play up news favorable to and play down news unfavorable to a good news source. This is particularly true of the member of Congress and the correspondent from the smaller city. The member wants a good report of his activities in Washington in his home newspaper, where the voters will read it, and the correspondent must cover his home delegation in Congress.

Many successful correspondents want friends, flocks of them—in Congress, in the executive departments, and in social life—and try to keep them as friends. Success may well depend largely on them. A word here, a hint there, and a correspondent has an exclusive page-one story or a new angle for an old story. The capable correspondent knows a good story when he sees it. He also knows how to treat confidences, and to repay them. He protects his news sources, as all newspapermen must, not only as a matter of honor but also because the source of one story may be the source of others. What is more, the politician or the junior official who gives him information may be risking his career in doing so. On the other hand there are correspondents who seek no friendships and never pull their punches, and they are among the ablest in Washington.

One correspondent also helps another. No one man, no one bureau, can cover Washington completely. Newspapermen frequently work in teams, especially those who are not employed by competing newspapers. The man from Denver will pass on facts that he has received from the Senator from Colorado to the New Yorker, who will later repay him in kind. On some stories all the men assigned to it work together, different ones covering different angles, and all exchanging their information in time to write their stories. They will meet in the lounge

rooms of the National Press Club, the gallery of the House or Senate, or the Willard Bar, or some club or restaurant, and each turn in his data. The man who expects to benefit from the exchange must also make his contribution. The lone wolf rarely gets far in Washington.

Next to the White House the most important maker of news in Washington is the Congress. In some administrations, and at times in all administrations, it is the most prolific source. In the early days of the New Deal the Congress was not much more than a ratifying body; it voted much of its authority to the President and for the rest did as it was told. In those days all initiative came from the White House. After the revolt over the Supreme Court issue the Congress took on a new importance. The chairman and the members of the important committees of the House and the Senate are now again prime news sources and are cultivated as such. There is more opposition, much of it coming from the majority party. Each demand from the White House is thoroughly scrutinized. Little legislation is enacted without major amendments. Congress once more is playing its historic rôle and making major news.

There is no difficulty in covering the deliberations of the House and Senate and the various and numerous congressional investigations and hearings. Facilities for the press are provided, although they are a bit overcrowded. The correspondent may sit in the gallery of the House or of the Senate or attend the hearing in the committee room. Later he has the *Congressional Record*, with the full verbatim report. In both the House and the Senate there are rooms provided with typewriters and telegraph wires and telephones, where he can write his story and send it to his newspaper. He has access to the lobbies of both chambers where he can meet representatives or senators and can use one of the page boys to carry a note to a member on the floor requesting information or an interview. The Speaker of the House and the Vice-President, who presides over the Senate, are readily accessible. So are the important committee chair-

men. The Congressional Library is available, and the newspaperman can obtain copies of any bills or documents in which he may be interested. The Congress is always aware of the presence of the press, and many a speech is made for its sole benefit.

The full drama, however, is not always enacted on the floors of the Congress. Often the best acts are played behind the scenes. The executive meeting of a committee, a party caucus, a conference of the leaders, or intervention by the President, the Vice-President, or the Speaker may well be the determining action. The alert correspondent knows about it. He reports the brewing revolt, the attempt at a compromise, or the final agreement long before it reaches the *Congressional Record*. Important legislation is frequently so thoroughly discounted in advance that the final vote on it is only a minor story that is printed on some obscure inside page.

Here again news contacts are vital. In Congress, however, this is easier than out of it. All the members are politicians who must take care of their political fences. The man who is joining the revolt on the Supreme Court issue has probably heard from his constituency and wants the people back home to know that he is fighting their battle. The man who is leading the fight for liberalization of veteran legislation wants the veterans to know about it. The man who is attacking the big corporations wants his voters to credit him for it. All are looking for support in the next elections; they make sure that the press passes the information along. Nothing of consequence remains a secret long on Capitol Hill.

And this is all part of our democratic processes. The Administration and the Congress are at all times conscious of the public that has the final say; and the press is anxious to provide an intelligent and accurate news report. One correspondent may emphasize one phase of it for the benefit of the Republican newspaper; another some other phase for the Democratic newspaper. One correspondent may stress one type of news for his

New York readers and another a different one for his readers in Kansas. Each group of readers gets the type of news it wants or requires. It is all there somewhere in the newspapers of the nation, and fortunately there is no law in this country forcing the reader to depend for his information on an official press or any specified newspaper. On the whole, an accurate picture of the Washington scene is presented in most American newspapers.

The majority of the correspondents are intelligent and capable. They know what is going on. Anyone with any lingering doubts should inveigle some correspondent into giving him an invitation to one of the Gridiron Club dinners. There he will see the correspondents lampoon the government and its policies right before the President and the leading officials of his administration. He will see the President take it, and reply in good humor. He will then realize that democracy is safe in these United States—at least for some time to come.

X. Political Campaigns

NOWHERE is the rôle of the press in our American democracy more evident than in the strange process that results in the election of a new president and the inauguration of a new government. From the first boom for the earliest candidate right through the national conventions, the notification ceremonies, the campaign, the elections, the construction of the cabinet, and the inauguration, the press is actively on the job, watching every move and keeping the public informed. It represents the people, and the people vote on the information it supplies. The press makes the whole process possible.

If you have had the good fortune to be present in person at one of the national conventions you were probably confused by the mob spectacle. It seemed devoid of direction and dignity. You saw a thousand delegates and as many more alternates grouped about state standards on the convention floor. You saw and heard thousands of your fellow-citizens in the galleries, most of whom treat the affair like a three-ring circus. There is color everywhere and noise, and all of it is partisan. Everybody shouts or sings or claps. Serious thought seems impossible in the prevailing atmosphere. Bands are blaring out raucous music. There are windy speeches. There are senseless demonstrations. Everything is exaggerated. Everything is deadly common. The highest appeal is aimed at the vulgar instincts of the mob. You may be pardoned for wondering how out of this confusion can emerge a platform of principles and a president to govern 130,000,000 Americans for the next four years.

Yet this is the highest expression of American democracy, a democracy that functions in the open, right under your eyes and under the eyes of the press. Observing a little more closely, you will notice hundreds of newspapermen seated at crude board desks about the rostrum, where they will not miss a move or a word. Some are listening to the performance. Some are taking notes. Some are writing on typewriters and handing their copy to telegraphers seated beside them. Occasionally one will leave his seat to consult one of the convention managers or the chairman. Others are posted on the convention floor where they can quickly reach the delegation leaders or cover any unusual development among the delegates.

Press photographers are everywhere. The flashes of their bulbs punctuate the proceedings. They delay the session while they scramble over desks to "shoot" the keynoter or some other dignitary. They order things to suit their purpose. "Bang the gavel." "Hold your hands up." "Look this way." "Shout a few words." Dozens of flashes! They seem insatiable, but their demands are met. The Senator from Nebraska is as anxious as they are that a photograph of him addressing the convention appear to advantage in the newspapers of the nation. So are other convention leaders. They are in the national spotlight for a few fleeting minutes; they want the people to know it.

The quadrennial Republican and Democratic Conventions are the most difficult assignments from any newspaper office, and among the few on which executive editors operate from the scene of the story. The news services and the leading newspapers are represented by large staffs, including their ablest men. The news breaks on a dozen fronts at one time, and in great volume, much of it behind the scenes. The major news development of the day may come when and where it is least expected. Quick assignment on the spot, quick coverage, quick writing, and quick transmission to the home office are vital. Much of the news is unpredictable. An alert editor, directing an able staff, does as well as he can and hopes for the best. He covers the obvious; he

watches news trends; his staff keeps in touch with friends among the convention leaders; and then he cannot be sure he has not been beaten until he reads the output of his rivals.

National conventions are of two kinds: the "bossed" convention, where most of the action is directed by the president in office or some powerful political leader; and the "unbossed" convention, which meets with only the vaguest idea of what its ultimate action will be, apart from denunciation of the program of the opposition party.

The "unbossed" convention naturally produces more fireworks and more news. Its demonstrations have more sincerity and significance. It carries the threat of surprise at all times. Efforts to control it or to stampede it are always interesting. The maneuvering of the managers of the rival candidates, the strategy of the organized groups to win endorsement of their principles, the functioning of the mob mind are thrilling to watch; but they provide a difficult problem for the press.

While almost always predictable the "bossed" convention also puts on a good show. There are the inevitable dissidents, who can make a lot of noise and sometimes a lot of trouble. Minor issues can make many interesting crises. The threat of revolt is always present. The leaders are anxious to impress the nation with a display of unanimity. They also want their share of newspaper headlines, and they usually get them. They let things go just so far and then they tighten the reins.

The best example of the "bossed" convention in recent years was the Republican Convention of 1920. Some weeks before it convened in Chicago Harry M. Daugherty, who was managing the preconvention campaign of Senator Warren G. Harding of Ohio, paid a visit to New York. He invited the city editors to send reporters to see him at the old Waldorf-Astoria. Three did so. The expected question was asked. Mr. Daugherty replied:

"About 2 A.M. Friday night a little group of bleary-eyed men

will meet in a smoke-filled room. I'll be there. We will decide who will be president. It will be Senator Harding."

One of the three reporters, a man representing a partisan Republican newspaper, made a mild protest. Mr. Daugherty was sure of himself. Then the reporter objected to the wording of the statement.

"Well, leave out the 'bleary-eyed,' but the rest of it stands," retorted the cynical Mr. Daugherty, and he departed to catch his train back to Ohio.

It did. The Chicago Convention put on a good show for four days. The various candidates made a fight of it. The Wilson administration was roundly condemned. There were lots of action and an abundance of talk, but at the designated hour the proper men met in the "smoke-filled room" and named the next President of the United States.

The newspapermen are among the earliest arrivals at the convention scene—and among the last to depart after the show is over. The editor in charge has to complete the working facilities for his staff. He must have adequate offices, with typewriters, etc., in the convention hotel, and in the convention hall, the latter usually in the basement. His leased wires must be set up, with connections into each of these offices and a loop to his bench on the convention floor. He must make sure of his living quarters, and in some cases he must make arrangements for his staff to eat and drink. National conventions are hectic affairs, and the editor in charge does not leave anything to chance.

Meanwhile the members of his staff are familiarizing themselves with their assignments, making contacts with the headquarters of the various candidates, of the national committee, and of the important state delegations. They line up all the news friends they have in the convention city, especially men in key positions, for friends are important at conventions. A word at the proper time will tip the reporter off to a major story; a friend on a committee can pass on a copy of a resolution or even the text of the platform; and the strategy of an aggressive

group or a new line-up may be divulged over a drink at one of the bars. The capable staff almost always knows what is coming, and not infrequently the ordinary run of delegate must read the newspapers to learn what is happening at the convention.

Then there is much local color to report: the decoration of the city; the facilities provided for the convention; the arrangements to entertain the delegates; and what the city expects to make out of it, for the city has had to contribute many thousands of dollars to get the convention and naturally expects reimbursement in cash or prestige. Each of these can make a story, and so can the national party leaders, the managers of the various candidates, and the organizers for the many pressure groups, who will be there in force. National conventions are the center of great propaganda drives, and they can make or break a national issue as well as build up or submerge the self-seeking man. Competent reporters are working at full steam before the convention gets under way and may well have already anticipated much of what it will accomplish.

With the arrival of the state delegations the flood of news starts. Each delegation makes its entry into the convention city an occasion, as it marches from the station to its hotel, with bands and banners, and with its favorite son and political potentates. Each brings its own color, whether it be nine-gallon hats, cornflowers, or brown derbies. Exhibitionism is the order of the day. The ordinarily quiet citizen of Wyoming may ride his horse into the hotel lobby. An Alaskan delegate may try to feed his bear in an important restaurant. The governor of Oklahoma may have his sixty-piece band serenade him at six o'clock in the morning, the hour he rises and the hour at which most of the other guests are just getting to sleep. Liquor flows easily. There are forty-eight states represented and six or more territories. Each is lined up behind a candidate, a favorite son or a dark horse, perhaps only to wrangle concessions later from the convention or the successful candidate. Each wants to make an im-

pression on the convention city, on the convention itself, and on the press.

The opening of the convention starts the real fireworks. First it must organize itself, listen to the keynote speeches, and then proceed to its three main purposes: the adoption of a platform of principles, the nomination of a candidate for president, and the nomination of a candidate for vice-president. In practice the nomination of the candidate for president is the major achievement, for the vice-president does not count much in the campaign to follow or in the new administration if the party is successful at the polls, and the presidential candidate not infrequently makes his own platform and gives no more than lip service to the principles adopted at the convention. The objective is victory. The convention tries to pick a winner.

A national convention, however, rarely goes at its work directly. It uses up many hours in "manufactured" demonstrations for candidates, the popularity of each being measured by the amount of noise his partisans can make or buy. It "delights to honor" former party leaders and will listen for two hours to the platitudes of a former president and "cheer him to the echo." It wants its own party's accomplishments lauded to the heavens and it is satisfied with nothing short of complete denunciation of the record of its political opponents. Its leaders will make certain that it consumes a week, thus giving the convention city, and its hotels, a chance to make a profit on the money paid into the party treasury. If a real fight develops it will go into a second week, if it is a Democratic convention—if Republican it will probably end in a deal. The Democratic Convention in New York in 1924 ran for a month. Newspapermen covering it began to doubt it would ever end. They were nervous wrecks when it was over.

Conventions would be comparatively simple and easy for the executive editor and his staff if the major news broke on the convention floor. This is rarely the case, the action of the convention merely ratifying decisions arrived at in some committee

room, at a conference in a hotel, or at a state delegation caucus, or dictated over the telephone by the President in the White House or by an important candidate sitting by the radio in Albany, Topeka, or elsewhere. Many attempts are made to stampede conventions, but only William Jennings Bryan was completely successful. The party's best political strategists and compromisers are on the scene. Political maneuvering is in the air. All the lobbies are full of rumors; press agents and propagandists are everywhere. The true situation, if there is any, is confused or obscured, only to be brought out at the proper time. Even the ablest political observers are often misled.

The large metropolitan newspapers want, and get, encyclopedic coverage of conventions. Their staffs are on the job from early morning, right through the afternoon and night sessions, and far into the night. They are never safe until the last political leader has retired for the night or until the last edition has gone to press and the editors in the home office have given "good night." Twenty hours straight duty daily, with often no more than a sandwich to eat, is the usual stint. Every development, every incident, every action of the convention is covered in detail.

Most of the metropolitan newspapers will have from five to twelve writers at the convention, besides the editor in charge, and also an editorial writer and photographers. A staff of ten seems the most effective for complete coverage, being large enough to get around and not so large as to be unwieldy. Here is a case where one good reporter is better than five incompetents—the man who can get the facts is the man who is wanted.

News services will, of course, use many more men to advantage. They must feed afternoon and morning newspapers which have all sorts of deadlines. The Associated Press has used as many as one hundred reporters, special writers, and editors on a convention, but it assigns a man to each state delegation to provide coverage of its activities for the state's newspapers. *The New York Times* and the *New York Herald Tribune* usually

each have nine or ten reporters at conventions, both receiving also the news of the Associated Press and the United Press.

How these men may be assigned at the first session of a convention will give some idea of the coverage—but only an idea, for all the news can rarely be completely anticipated, and the editor in charge must be ready for any emergency.

First of all one man, in most cases the chief Washington correspondent who knows political news and political personalities inside out, will be assigned to do the lead. He will deal with the larger theme and the strategy and attempt to predict the ultimate action as well as record the specific actions of the day. The newspaper's reader can get an intelligent conception of what it is all about from his story.

Two men will do a running story of the session. They will sit at a bench in the press box and record the convention's actions detail by detail as they happen, working in relays, each operating a noiseless typewriter and handing his copy to the editor in charge, who, after looking it over, hands it to a telegraph operator at his elbow with a direct wire to the home office. At the end of the session one of them will write a lead for their joint story.

One or two men will be assigned to the convention floor during the session, where they can get names of delegates and texts of speeches and of the prayer, and can cover any incidents among the delegates or in the galleries; they also interview convention or delegation leaders.

One man will be assigned to do a "color" story, a picture story of the convention scene or a demonstration, or a story of some important leader or picturesque happening.

One man, sometimes two, will be assigned to the committee on resolutions, which will be busy drafting the convention platform. Here he will encounter all the pressure groups, all the special interests, all the propagandists, and all the "nuts" which infest conventions. They will be there to press their causes with wordy arguments. They all represent votes and so they will all

get a hearing. He will have to get the various planks as they are accepted by the committee and he will make arrangements to get the complete platform as soon as it is ready—before his competitors, if possible.

One man will be assigned to cover the deliberations of the credentials committee, which decides on the seating of the delegates. Usually there are half a dozen contests before it, often by Negro delegates from the South and sometimes by delegates of rival political leaders or interests from the same state. They generally put up a good fight and sometimes carry it to the convention floor.

One man will be assigned to cover the headquarters of the presidential candidates, keeping a close watch on the mustering of the delegates for each, checking one claim against another, and on the moves of each manager to strengthen his position in the convention.

One man will be assigned to the candidates for vice-president, keeping in touch with each. He will watch for the deal which is inevitably made for the vice-presidency when the presidential nomination is assured.

One man will be assigned to cover the activities of the newspaper's state delegation. He will be continuously in touch with its leaders, attend all the state caucuses, and report how the delegation will vote on the candidates and the issues before the convention. He may also cover the caucuses of other important states.

Still another man will be assigned to the headquarters of the National Committee. He will attend the conferences of the National Chairman and report the program for the convention and other decisions made by the committee, some of which will be of major importance.

Finally a woman will be assigned to cover the activities of the women, which have been increasingly significant since women obtained suffrage. The women have their own special interests to provide for in the platform and are steadily pressing for

larger and better representation in party organizations. This reporter will also cover the social side of the convention.

While these will probably embrace the major assignments on such a day, there will be many more arising from the flow of events. National conventions are dynamic and aggressive and emit a steady flow of news. Few assignments are ended until the convention itself adjourns sine die. A reporter writes a story and then watches his sources to record later developments. New leads and inserts for later editions are the rule rather than the exception. Few decisions are unanimous, and it will always be necessary to record the reaction of the opposition, and what they will do about it. The election to follow may well turn on how the "steamroller" squelches the "bitter enders." Each action of the convention has a story behind it—how it was done—and this in many instances may be more interesting and more significant than the action itself. We are dealing here with the lives and hopes of the American people, and the conscientious editor completes the record for his readers.

As each reporter ends his assigned task, he at once goes hunting for another story. He drifts among the delegates and political leaders in the hotel lobbies, bars, and other gathering places. He looks up personal friends. He listens to the sad story of the dissidents. He meets newspaper associates, from distant or non-competing newspapers, and exchanges information. He gets ideas and tips worth developing. He lays his lines for stories on succeeding days. He may stumble across important news in the making.

An idea of how news is developed or discovered at conventions may be obtained from an incident at the Republican Convention in Chicago in 1932. The renomination of President Hoover was assured, as was also a platform that would meet his approval—excepting for prohibition. The Hoover forces were in control of the convention, led by Ogden Mills, Secretary of the Treasury, and the President's two secretaries, Lawrence Richey and Walter H. Newton, with a direct telephone line to

the White House. These estimable gentlemen were discreetly silent on prohibition, then the burning issue, despite the ravages of the depression. Newspapermen quickly discovered that sentiment among the delegates was strong for repeal. They reported that fact. It was known that the President favored the "noble experiment" and had had conferences with Senator Borah, a leading "dry," on the eve of the convention, but that was all. It was not known whether the President would dictate the action of the convention on this, as he was doing on almost everything else.

The editor in charge and the chief Washington correspondent of a New York newspaper were sitting in their office in the Congress Hotel discussing the convention problems, including this one, when they were favored with a visit by Mrs. Ogden Mills and Mrs. Alice Roosevelt Longworth. These two ladies were looking for information—for the "low-down." They asked many questions and received honest answers. Among other questions Mrs. Mills asked:

"What do you think are the chances for the President's prohibition plank?"

"Oh, it will go right through," responded the executive editor, without blinking an eye.

The moment the ladies had taken their departure the correspondent turned to him.

"Did you hear what Mrs. Mills asked?"

"Did I!" he retorted. "That's your lead tonight."

And it was. The fact that the President had written his own prohibition plank was a major beat, the outstanding beat of the convention.

Competition for news is so keen among newspapermen at conventions that in Chicago in 1932 one metropolitan newspaper assigned one of its men to cover a rival reporter. This reporter, one of the best informed and most astute in journalism, was covering Democratic headquarters. He got all that the other reporters got and a lot more. Then one day he realized that every

step he made and every word he said and everything he heard was in the presence of this unwelcome companion. He returned to his office and informed his editor of the new situation. They decided that there was one thing to do. He retired to his hotel room and used the telephone. He produced more beats than ever, the Democratic leaders sympathizing with his plight and doing all in their power, and that not a little, to help him along.

Most metropolitan newspapers, especially the morning newspapers, carry a great volume of news on the national conventions, ranging from twenty to forty columns daily, depending on how the news is breaking. The physical task of editing and handling so great a volume is a difficult problem for the editor on the scene. If his newspaper is in the Eastern states he frequently has an hour or two by the clock working against him. Obviously all copy cannot be handled in the final hour, and with a continuous flow of action by a functioning convention it takes ability of a high order to direct the gathering of the news and the writing of it "to make the paper." Many of the more important and inconclusive stories are sent with "leads to come," and the leads follow at the last moment with the latest vote or the latest action of the convention as the edition is going to press. A sudden change in the news between editions, caused by some new important action by the convention, can well mean the changing of a half-dozen stories. This will require fast thinking, fast editing, fast writing, and fast action by the staff at the scene.

Such an elaborate division of a story also presents great difficulty for the editor in charge for he must see that each reporter keeps his story in his own news channel and does not range over into another man's territory. He generally has a staff of "prima donnas" to deal with, and at least half of them will try to do the lead story, instead of confining themselves to their own particular features of the day's developments.

Often convention stories, which read so calmly and so smoothly at the breakfast table the next morning, were writ-

ten in the midst of wild demonstrations. The reporter had to do his well-written and well-considered piece with bands blaring, semi-hysterical delegates parading, and thousands in the galleries yelling. Other reporters and photographers stepped over him and his typewriter as they moved to more advantageous spots to watch the scene, and he, himself, had to shout to make himself heard by the editor sitting beside him. Arthur Krock does a masterly job in such a setting, turning out in a half-hour a lead story that has the finish and grace of a leading editorial written in the peace of the editorial sanctum and that is accurate in fact and expression to the last word.

What is more, the editor in charge must make sure that the staff is presenting a complete and accurate picture of what is happening at the convention. He must present the conflict of personalities and issues in their true colors. He must give a detailed explanation of every important action, how it was done and what it portends. He must give fair treatment to friend and foe. He must explain the strategy of the important leaders and the prospect of its winning out. No matter how confusing things may appear on the surface, he must know where the convention is going, and who is doing the steering. He must make it intelligible to his readers.

When, for instance, William Randolph Hearst at a critical point in the 1932 Democratic Convention got the California and Texas delegations to swing from Speaker Garner to Governor Roosevelt he broke up the "Stop Roosevelt" movement and gave us President Roosevelt, Vice-President Garner, and the New Deal. This one action changed the whole complexion of the convention and of American history—in a few minutes. When Senator William G. McAdoo appeared on the platform to make the announcement—with great gusto—it was too late for previously uninformed newspapermen to find out what had really happened. Events were coming fast and furious, and all they could do was record them. The capable editor had had a

reporter at the caucus of the Texas delegation, and he knew what it was all about, and so did his readers.

Incidentally, William Randolph Hearst, Jr., who represented his father at that convention, paid a visit to the staff of *The New York Times* later to make sure that it had the correct version. He explained that his father wanted it in *The Times*, for then the country would believe it. *The Times* staff already had it.

Covering a national convention is a tough job, but it is great fun. It is the stuff of which history is made. It has a glamour and a thrill that few other assignments have, and the scoring of a beat against the journalistic talent present is a great personal triumph.

With the conventions over there is a breathing spell until the notification ceremonies, except in the case of the precedent-breaking Mr. Roosevelt, who made the notification part of the convention ceremonies. Then follow the national campaign, the election, the inauguration of the president, and the installation of the new administration. The press follows right through, one story flowing into the next.

The national campaign, whether conducted from a front porch, from the White House, or from a train on a swing around the country, offers no great problem in news coverage, although it requires reporting talent of an unusual order. Each of the news services and of the larger newspapers assigns a reporter to each of the leading presidential candidates. This man must have a large knowledge of national politics and of national political figures. He must understand the significance of every move the candidate makes and the importance of every individual the nominee sees. When the candidate takes to the road he must appraise the kind of reception at every major stop. He must be able to see through the "manufactured" welcome, estimate the cheering crowds with some degree of accuracy, and be able to judge the sincerity and spontaneity of the acclaim. Cheers do not always mean votes, as William Jennings Bryan and Al-

fred E. Smith discovered. He must keep a sharp watch on the local celebrities—their absence or coolness may mean much or little. He may be called upon to do a story one day on sentiment in Montana and the next on sentiment in California.

Crowds and the clock add two more difficulties. The reporter is beset by the onrush of people about a candidate even more than the candidate himself. If he is separated from the official party he may have trouble getting back to the train on time. Then the farther he moves West the earlier he must file his story to make editions in Atlantic Coast newspapers. He may have no facilities for writing his story and have to tap it out on his portable typewriter in a taxicab or on his lap in some corner of a crowded public hall. Fortunately he has adequate telegraphic facilities, for the major wire companies have representatives traveling with the press and they arrange for quick transmission.

Usually the reporter has the text of the candidate's major speeches available some hours before delivery. This gives him an opportunity to send the text to the office and to write an advance lead story from it. Then all he has to do is to forward an insert covering the crowds, the reception, any changes in plans, and significant incidents.

Different candidates, however, have different methods. President Franklin D. Roosevelt, for example, rarely released a speech until just before delivery. The material was gathered for him and a first draft made of it, but he insisted on putting the finishing touches to it, giving it some of himself. He might go over it several times, making many changes each time, and altering the phraseology. The result was that the reporter often had to write his lead story while the President was actually speaking.

Important incidents at Roosevelt meetings have as a consequence gone unrecorded. In a campaign speech at Baltimore he interpolated a reference to the Supreme Court which forecast his action on that body. The reporters were busy writing their

stories from the text. Only one man noticed the interpolation. In the stress of the occasion he forgot about it. It was ignored in the press.

As a general practice, however, Mr. Roosevelt followed his text to the word.

Alfred E. Smith in 1928 offered a complete contrast. After conferences with his advisers his written speeches were released to the press. The text and a lead based on it generally appeared in the first editions. Then the genial governor proceeded to speak extemporaneously, following the outline of the argument, but in his own picturesque words and in his own colorful character. Most newspapers picked up the delivered text from the radio for later editions, and it was generally necessary to have a new lead as well.

An idea of how accurately the reporters covering a presidential campaign appraise its progress may be obtained from a poll taken by *Editor and Publisher* on the two presidential trains at the end of October, 1936, about a week before the balloting. There were thirty-eight men on Alfred M. Landon's train and thirty on the Roosevelt train. These men represented all shades of political opinion. They had seen at least one of the candidates in action and listened to the cheering crowds. Only seven men gave Landon a chance for victory, and all of these were on the Landon train, some of them his close friends. The consensus was that Roosevelt would beat Governor Landon by a bigger majority in the electoral college than he had President Hoover. Incidentally a poll by *Editor and Publisher* of the Washington press corps about the same time was unanimously for a Roosevelt victory.

With the campaign over, the election comes. Even the best-organized and best-equipped newspaper finds this a hard task. It is especially difficult for morning newspapers. It is the one night in the year when the whole staff is on the job, all leaves and nights off being canceled. Figures and stories pour in from forty-eight states and a hundred cities. There are always impor-

tant congressional and state and municipal elections as well as the national campaign. There may be important referenda. All these have to be sized up, written up, and displayed in the newspaper. Practically nothing stays put. Figures are changing every minute, and in close contests the lead may alternate from one candidate to another between editions. Fortunately, however, once the editors have been able to establish a definite trend in the voting they can forecast the result. It is then only a matter of how big the victory will be. Elaborate preparations are made for election night. Biographies and pictures of the important candidates are ready in advance, and arrangements are made to cover all critical and significant contests. Usually the editors know long before the event how it is going to turn out. For the fun of it a news editor of *The New York Times* wrote eight-column, sixty-point-type headlines for the 1932 election six weeks before the balloting. On election night he took the proof from a drawer of his desk. It was used and it stood up all night.

The inauguration is a big story and is covered in a big way, but it offers no great problem to editors or reporters. Apart from the outline of policy in the inaugural address the news is largely known in advance. Even the inaugural address may have been largely discounted. Experienced editors and reporters could, apart from minor incidents, write it all in advance. It does, however, take good organization of the staff covering it and complete co-ordination in the writing and editing, and much of it calls for a first-class job in reporting. An inauguration, especially if it means a change in party administration, is a historic event and a vital factor in the life and progress of the nation. The men and women who covered the first inauguration of Franklin D. Roosevelt will never forget that dark day.

The press of the United States, especially the editors and reporters covering the news, considers itself a part of the democratic process of the nation. It takes this duty seriously. It prides itself on giving the electorate a fair and accurate picture of the candidates and the issues, regardless of its own political inclina-

tions. It may chide or even condemn candidates and issues on the editorial page, but it opens its news columns to these same men and issues. There are exceptions, but on the whole the American press gives all political parties a chance to present their ideas of how the country should be governed.

XI. Financial Editor

AMERICANS live and work in a dynamic world, a fast-moving world of great business cycles that sweep upward or downward to their ultimate climax. Our business, our industry, and our agriculture function on quick and accurate information. The daily action of the stock market, the latest figures for carloadings, steel production, or power consumption, the markets for wheat, cotton, copper, and rubber, the trends in credit, the weather forecast, mean the difference between profits and losses for the citizen in the city or on the farm. So long as the American people continue their individualistic and capitalistic system, so long will business and financial news be read with intense interest. It is the economic lifeblood of the nation.

How vital this information is and how important serious newspapers consider it may be judged from the fact that the New York *Herald Tribune* and *The New York Times* devote about forty per cent of their news space to it. All New York newspapers, excepting the tabloids, give generous allotments of space to business and financial news—more than to any other classification. The afternoon newspapers range from thirty to fifty columns daily, and the morning newspapers from seventy to ninety daily, with special sections of eight or ten pages on Sundays. Catering as they do to the greatest business center of the country, the New York newspapers naturally place more emphasis on this kind of news than do others, but the newspapers of every city supply the financial and business news of

interest to their readers, news tailored to fit the business pattern of the community.

The coverage of financial and business news in the American press has expanded steadily since the Civil War, keeping stride with the industrial and agricultural development of the country. It has grown right through good times and bad. It got a great impetus in the 1920's when the eyes of the nation were focused on the stock quotations in Wall Street. It got a still greater impetus from the Roosevelt administration's efforts to combat two depressions. In 1940 it reached a new peak. Every managing editor who takes a serious view of the world about him makes certain of an adequate news report of business and agricultural conditions. His readers demand no less.

Under the New Deal much of the emphasis shifted to Washington. The government's various moves to reform banking and to regulate railroads and public utilities, its devaluation of the currency, its vast programs of public works, its large-scale direct relief, its extension of credit, its attempts to restrain Wall Street and the other stock and commodity markets, its control of agriculture and crops, its open encouragement of labor in demands for collective bargaining and particularly higher wages and shorter hours, its use of its taxing powers to force a redistribution of wealth, its tax on pay rolls for social security for the worker, and a dozen other activities had a direct and prompt reaction on the businessman and the farmer and the worker. Much of the big news since 1929 has been social and economic, and it has overflowed from the financial pages right to page one. The prospects are that it will continue so for many years to come, despite the efforts of a great war to divert attention from our own domestic affairs. Much of the war news for that matter is economic.

Day in and day out there is a steady flow of financial and business news from the national capital. More and more the federal government is intervening in the business of the country, either to regulate its conduct or to help it in its varied activities.

the world. It is the whispering gallery of the nation. It is full of all sorts of wild rumors. It has the President ill one day; it has him dead the next. It seems to be ready to believe anything. The speculator with a heavy line of stocks is always jittery. He listens to anything and everything that may affect them, often unconsciously exaggerating or distorting his information. There was a time when false news was deliberately manufactured in Wall Street. The SEC has largely stopped that. The speculator can make money on false news—often faster than he can on correct news. One thing only is certain in Wall Street at all times and that is the quotation on the ticker, but Wall Street does gather much accurate information on corporation earnings and activities and on business conditions affecting stocks and bonds. Its own action is big news.

The newspapers serve a double duty for Wall Street. They bring Wall Street the news of the world; they take out and give the world the news of Wall Street itself.

On the average day it takes upwards of thirty columns of type to print the bare financial transactions that concern Wall Street and the other markets. The dealings in stocks on the New York Stock Exchange, with the bid-and-asked quotations in stocks not dealt in, will take about nine columns, while the dealings in bonds will take from five to six more. The transactions of the Curb Exchange in stocks and bonds will eat up seven columns. The business of the over-the-counter brokers in unlisted stocks and bonds will require from two and a half to three columns. Then there are the principal out-of-town markets, Boston, Cleveland, St. Louis, San Francisco, Salt Lake City, Chicago, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, Los Angeles, Detroit, Montreal, and Toronto. These will require two or three more columns. There will be further tables on the foreign-exchange market, the Treasury condition, the reports of the foreign banks of issue, the Bank of England, the Bank of France, the Bank for International Settlements at Basel, transactions of the leading foreign markets, like London, Paris, Berlin,

and Amsterdam, dividends declared, the reports of the clearing-house, the condition of commercial banks and money and credit.

Most of these tables will require explanatory news stories. There will be the leads for the stock exchange, the bond market, and the curb, telling how each of these acted and the forces that affected prices. There will be news stories and sometimes tables and charts on the regular indices, the latest report on railroad carloadings, steel-mill activity, the consumption of power, automobile production, oil output, textile fabrication, corporation dividends, etc. There will also be news stories on the earnings of corporations, new corporate financing, and reorganizations. Finally there will be full reports on the commodity markets, including the New York Cotton Exchange, the Chicago Board of Trade, and the markets for livestock, sugar, coffee, cocoa, cottonseed oil, pepper, wool, rubber, hides, silk, lead, zinc, tin, silver, and other industrial raw materials and food stuffs. In short there will be complete coverage of all news of interest to Wall Street, to the readers who look to Wall Street, and to the citizens who are affected by its dealings.

This does not complete the financial and business news coverage, for most metropolitan newspapers devote a page or more to commercial or purely business news, upwards of a page to real estate news, and probably as much to ocean shipping and the weather.

The business news will cover the demand for goods both retail and wholesale, the buying and sales by department stores, the activity in linens, dress goods, textiles, burlap, etc., and will carry the latest court records on bankruptcy proceedings, receiverships, assignment of assets, judgments, satisfied judgments, and mechanics' liens. The arrival of buyers will be listed, along with the goods in which they are interested, and there will be the latest information on commercial loans. Many newspapers also devote a column or so to news of the advertising agencies, recording their activities and the advertising campaigns they are planning.

The real-estate page will cover all news of interest in its field, including all important transfers of property, big leases, and large mortgages, new building ventures and developments in public housing.

The shipping page will report the arrival and departure of passenger and freight ships—and latterly transpacific and transatlantic airplanes—with the mails they carry, and will include all news of interest to shipping men.

Information on the weather is becoming more and more vital to American business. If Mark Twain could reappear he would find that the newspapers are doing something about it. Probably no other one fact is so vital in our daily life. The family planning a picnic in the country, the mother considering switching her family from winter underwear, the taxi driver in the city's streets, the prospective air traveler, the ship captain about to put to sea, the manager of the department store, all look to their daily newspaper for the weather forecasts before starting on their ventures. A rain storm in the South affects the price of cotton on the New York market. A drought in the West changes the quotations for wheat, corn, and a half-dozen other crops. A tropical storm off Florida can cause millions of dollars of damage, and the coming snowstorm in New York can bring employment to thousands of workers on the sidewalks of New York. The apartment dweller in Chicago or Boston will look up the weather in Dallas, Bermuda, or Cannes to see how his friends are faring. Our whole economy is predicated on the weather, right from the tropics to the Arctic. Man functions only as the weather permits.

Most newspapers carry weather forecasts, usually printed on the top of page one, with more complete data inside. Some, like the New York *Sun* and *The New York Times*, print daily weather maps which show weather movements. All try to give the weather information that their readers need in their lives and their business. This generally includes the official weather report for all the major cities of the nation, for the important

vacation resorts, for the more important crop areas, for the shipping routes, for the airplane lines, and for the newspaper's immediate territory. Most of this data is supplied by the government's Weather Bureau, which gathers it at great expense, correlates it, and makes it available to the public.

A few newspapers gather their own meteorological information and make their own predictions. The New York *Daily News* contends that its own forecasts are more accurate than those of the Weather Bureau.

Not infrequently weather news moves out of the normal routine and becomes major news. When it does it is taken over by the city editor or whatever news editor covers the field concerned. A heat wave in the East, a drought in the West, a flood in the Mississippi Valley or the Connecticut Valley, can crowd other news off page one. A storm warning on the Atlantic seacoast changes the daily life of millions of people.

Obviously financial news-reporting requires specialization and expert treatment. The New York newspapers that cover Wall Street firsthand employ large and competent staffs. These work under the direction of the financial editor, who is responsible only to the managing editor. He, himself, will probably write the market lead, telling of the major moves during the day in the financial markets and explaining the forces and the news that affected prices. He will very likely have another man who will do semi-editorial leads for bonds and for the curb, and write comment on interesting phases of the news.

The division of the news among the financial reporters will naturally vary according to the newspaper and the number of men it has available for the job, but most likely each of its men will cover one or more of these fields: banking, investment banking, foreign exchange, the manufacturing industries, the extractive industries, railroads, public utilities, insurance, investment trusts, commodities, the automotive industries, and the amusement industries. Besides these there will be reporters or rewrite men who will deal with company reports, dividend lists,

the interviewing of financial leaders, and a hundred other aspects of financial news. To complete the staff there will be a corps of statisticians to figure out market averages and other tabular matter.

The tabloids, of course, are an exception. They dispose of financial and business news in about one and a half of their abbreviated columns—or about seven hundred words. In this space they give the trend of the markets of the day, with any unusual incidents, outline the forces that affected prices, and attempt to predict future movements. They use no tabular matter, apart from the action of ten or fifteen leading stocks. This is generally the work of one man.

This sort of treatment has not affected their circulation—on the contrary it has helped it. The regular newspapers try to maintain complete objectivity in financial news, and anything that could be interpreted as tipping the public on any stock or group of stocks or advocating the purchase or sale of stocks is anathema. The result is that the speculator will read his regular newspaper for information on finances and the quotations on individual stocks, and then turn to the tabloids, along with other tipster sheets, for a forecast of market action. The tabloids are no better informed than others, their financial editors often basing their predictions on those of Standard Statistics, Babson, Moody, Poor's, or some other market-forecasting bureau, and are as often wrong as are others; but the Wall Street speculator, professional or amateur, is incurable.

Speed is vital in financial news-reporting, especially on the afternoon newspapers. Readers are often amazed at the speed with which newspapers like the New York *Sun* and the New York *World-Telegram* reach the street after the closing of the New York Exchange, with the last quotation on stocks, an intelligently done lead on the market, and full coverage of the financial news of the day. Methods differ, but it is all a matter of efficient organization. The financial tables, which offer the greatest problem, are generally set by hand, one instance where the old-

time printer is still more efficient than the new typesetting machines. Each printer has a group of stocks, and reading the ticker tape, he keeps abreast of the market at all times, much as do the boys changing quotations on the old-fashioned stockbroker's board. The result is that the newspaper is ready to go to press a few minutes after the ticker carries the final quotation. Meanwhile the financial editor writes his lead for each edition as the market proceeds, making inserts when necessary, and he finishes also with the market. Then it remains only to lock the page forms. Half an hour after the stock-exchange gong, newspapers are for sale on the streets.

On morning newspapers the procedure is different. Here the editors and the reporters await the close of the exchanges. The final quotations are carried by the Associated Press. Until recent years each newspaper compiled its own tables, using a large staff of statisticians for this purpose, but this was both inefficient and expensive. Now the Associated Press list is generally accepted and is put into type in the late afternoon. The financial leads and other financial and business news are written early, edited, and set in type. The many columns of agate tables are one of the major problems of every composing room, and editors organize to dispose of them and of the financial news before the rush of sports and general news. The financial pages are usually the first disposed of. They may be opened later, and between editions, to make corrections and to insert later news.

Financial news reporting requires conscientious, honest, skillful, and independent work. It is based on special training and an aptitude for the field. The reporter must be so well acquainted with his specialty, with his news background, and with the personalities that dominate it, that he is ready at all times to add two and two together to make a story. There are still corporations in Wall Street that feel that their affairs are their own only, and offer little or no information to the public. These show hostility to even the simplest inquiries. There are also borderline organizations—fewer now than some years ago—for

whom secrecy is necessary if the public is to be successfully beguiled. For decades disclosure was not a habit in the financial community, where often the right information made money—and made it fast. The SEC regulations have forced many organizations to disgorge information. On the other hand, there is not a first-rank corporation in Wall Street where reporters are not welcomed and where their questions are not answered, when the information is available. These corporations have a sense of public responsibility. It is axiomatic in financial news circles that the bigger and better the financial house or the corporation the more accessible is the truth, that the bigger the man the easier it is to see him.

Many of the larger organizations today employ public-relations officers, who may rank from the chairman of the board down to the humble part-time press agent. Many more employ the services of the various firms which specialize in advising corporations on press relations and advertising. These perform a valuable service to the reporter in that they are readily available, but the capable financial news reporter does not stop there. He cultivates the acquaintance of the presiding officials, partners in brokerage and investment banking houses, and often the second-flight officials whose activities are the breath of life of their institutions, although they themselves are unknown to the public. He goes to them when he wants the “real low-down” and often gets it, perhaps confidentially. He, too, goes beyond the handout and does not stop until he has determined the exact truth. The truth is not always easy to get in Wall Street.

With the tradition of J. Pierpont Morgan and George F. Baker still strong in the Street and with their aversion to personal publicity and to public quotation well known and often admired, many leaders in the financial community are cautious on public statement and reluctant to be quoted on anything apart from the affairs of their own business. This does not mean that their opinions and ideas are not represented in the news. They are, but they are usually incorporated in that nebulous

thing known as Wall Street opinion. When the New York newspapers or the news services carry a story giving the reaction of Wall Street on important legislation or national or international affairs, the reader may be sure that nine times out of ten it is a fair and accurate picture of what is in the minds of the leading financiers and bankers. Thomas W. Lamont of the House of Morgan, Winthrop Aldrich, Chairman of the Chase National Bank, and men of their caliber will talk freely with the questioning reporter on the understanding that they will not be quoted by name, a confidence that is never violated. It gives the public a true picture of the financial community, without embarrassment to its leaders. Under the New Deal many corporation executives were afraid of reprisals.

Deliberate manufacture and circulation of false news in Wall Street seems to be a thing of the past, a relic of the halcyon days before the great depression. The SEC's regulations and the new morals have dealt a deathblow to these methods. In the old, gay, easy-money days "pool" operations in stocks were general. It was the pool manager's first task to keep his operations secret until a sufficient block of the stock concerned had been accumulated, and his second task to broadcast favorable reports about the stock to permit him to unload it on the public at higher prices. If he could get these reports into the newspapers, all the better. In some cases such pools were formed in anticipation of a genuinely favorable development in the particular stock, and this genuine development having news value would be recorded in the financial pages. In other cases, bribery would be attempted, such as carrying some reporter or editor for a block of stock in return for the desired news treatment.

It is strange, in retrospect, to record the fact that in those days the financial community had few ethical qualms in seeking a "good press," or in the circulation of false information on pool operations. In fairness it should also be recorded that an overwhelming majority of the financial writers had no part in these things. The few who did were soon discovered and told

to feather their nests elsewhere. On the contrary financial editors and reporters frequently warned the public of the sinister character of pool operations—long before official investigations brought out the ugly facts and rules were adopted to prevent such notorious practices. These methods are almost impossible now, removing another hazard in financial reporting.

Although fewer than at any other time in the history of Wall Street, the pitfalls in the path of the financial reporter are still numerous and enticing. A nice sense of ethics is still one of the requisites for the financial writer. In the first place, he is dealing in information, and the right information is worth money in Wall Street. Many financial reporters and editors buy or sell stocks for their own accounts, as do other citizens. Unless their work is completely objective, there is the risk that their stock tradings may color their writing. Then the financial reporter unavoidably comes into daily contact with many persons of wealth and high position with axes to grind. The new reporter may be flattered by the attentions of the great financier, but not so much so when he learns that the financier is cultivating him solely in order to promote public interest in his corporation and help raise the prices of his stocks. Pressure can be brought on the financial writer in many ways, and there are few that are not attempted.

Virtually every man who has reported in Wall Street has sooner or later had someone offer to "carry" him in a stock. In other words, he is offered a "call" on the stock at the day's price, or a lower price, or a higher price, and he can order the stock sold and delivered at some future time, pocketing the profit. The obvious reason is to get good treatment in the financial pages. This does not necessarily mean coloring the news itself; it may mean giving it more space or a better display than it merits. It has succeeded on occasion, it will probably succeed again, but the ethical reporter will have none of it. Early in life, he learns to distinguish the financial goats from the sheep. He also learns that exposure is inevitable; and that

when he loses his position with his newspaper his Wall Street briber will not be interested in him.

On the whole financial reporting is a rather drab, routine affair, consisting mostly in the prosaic analysis of monthly, quarterly, or annual corporation reports, recording changes in executive staffs, new investment issues, the voting or passing of dividends, etc. Only a few trusted and experienced men do the leads, the reaction stories, and the semi-editorial comment on the financial status of the community, the nation, and the world. The humblest financial reporter must, however, keep informed on what is happening in the world about him. Other reporters will cover the big labor news, the latest legislation in Washington and the important developments in the far corners of the world, but any one of these stories may well affect his assignment. The government's policy on utilities naturally touches the situation the reporter covering utilities must present. British rearmament and the new war and war orders will be of interest to the man covering the steel companies. The Japanese fiscal crisis resulting from Japan's venture in China involves the New York market for silk. Scientific developments may change the prospects and the activities of a large, well-entrenched industry. And so it goes. The intelligent and competent financial reporter must know what it is all about.

There are two things that the financial writer does not and should not do: forecast events that might affect market prices—unless he is positive that the advance information at his disposal is accurate—and recommend the purchase or sale of securities or commodities. The ethical financial editor or reporter presents all the information he has available, without suppressing unfavorable facts, and lets the potential investor or speculator make his own decisions. There is and always has been a tendency—it is probably human nature—to give good news a bigger play than bad news. This has been particularly true during the depression. Favorable financial news has not infrequently found itself dressing page one; but bad news short of

financial cataclysm must be content with the inside pages. Americans, including their editors, are inveterate optimists. Bulls are always popular; bears unpopular.

The financial staff does, of course, get its big stories, and the depression brought it more than its usual quota. The financial collapse of 1929, the bank closings of 1933, the abandoning of the gold standard, the suicide of Ivar Kreuger, and many other stories of the past ten years have given them stirring days and nights, and a full measure of excitement. On such an occasion the whole staff may turn aside from its normal routine and organize to concentrate on the big news. There are occasions when one financial story is so big that it dominates the news picture of the day.

The bank holiday of March, 1933, was one. *The New York Times* assigned six of its financial reporters to cover the banking situation, work done normally by one man. There was a general shifting of other assignments to free these men for their new tasks. These six men worked fourteen to sixteen hours daily, gathering information on the banking crisis and the other developments in the financial and commercial community resulting from it. One man did the lead story, basing it on the information gathered by the whole staff. Others did collateral stories on the other aspects of the news. The scene was changing so rapidly that it was often necessary to rewrite the stories between editions. The Washington staff covered its own end, including the White House, the Treasury, and the Federal Reserve Board, while foreign correspondents dealt with developments abroad. A big story was handled in a big way.

The suicide of Kreuger presented an interesting problem for the financial staffs. The Associated Press carried the first flash at 12:15 on Saturday afternoon, March 12, 1932. The natural question was why the great Swedish industrialist and financier should end his life. He was known as one of the most successful men in the world. His financial standing was unquestioned. He even financed governments in return for their match monop-

lies. His career was thrilling and glamorous; his life romantic and picturesque. *The New York Times* set out to find the answer. Its financial editor sent one man to the New York offices of Kreuger's banking associates, a second collected information on his stock-market activities, a third tabulated his various financial and industrial interests, a fourth checked up on the securities sold by his companies in America, a fifth worked up historical and personal background. As a result *The Times* the next morning was able to present facts that made it evident that Kreuger had killed himself because of unsolvable financial difficulties, including an overextended position in declining stock markets. It took the liquidators several years to unravel his financial tangle.

Although there is considerable overlapping, most newspapers cover business news with a separate staff. It represents an effort to provide trade and industrial information of interest and value to businessmen. In some cases newspapers are running more real business news than financial news in their financial columns. Sometimes these pages are designated, "Business-Finance-Industry." Most men, and in these days, many women, devote at least eight hours daily to some form of business, and are naturally concerned with information that so vitally affects their daily work and their livelihood.

Business news reporting requires a technique all its own and is another specialized field. It is obvious that the business-news reporter must make a continuing study of business conditions and trends and must have sufficient background to appreciate the significance of the information he gathers. He does not drop today's story for something different tomorrow. His great value to his newspaper and to its readers will be in knowing the mechanics of trade and industry, what products are made, and how, and how they are sold and to whom. He must talk the businessman's language, and write it. He must be able to win and hold the businessman's confidence and respect.

During the worst days of the depression, for instance, the

business-news department of at least one New York newspaper received frequent requests from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation for reports on conditions in several industries where loans were being considered. Its editor was able to furnish details that possibly were not obtainable from other sources.

As the business-news reporter's stories are addressed to the businessman, and generally are read only by him, they can be more technical than news for general readers, and more detailed. A happening that might not be worth more than a paragraph or two to the city editor may well be worth elaborate treatment by the business-news editor. He has his own measure of news values. While his stories will probably be lacking in human interest and written with as little color and drama as possible, they may well be the most stirring reading in the whole newspaper for the business community.

The business-news reporter must exercise particular care in his selection of news sources. He must reach the men who know what is going on all the time. He cannot afford to waste time on ill-informed men, no matter how friendly disposed. He must search out the key men in each industry. He must attend the usual conferences and conventions at hotels and trade-association offices. These, however, often supply more talk than action. As the best business news is that which affects the pocket-book and makes profits or losses, he must watch and cover the announcements of price changes, new styles or vogues, and delivery conditions. Much of this news is picked up in market coverage. More tips for stories can be found on the business firing line than in any number of conventions. Here contacts are necessary, and to make and cultivate these contacts the reporter must know his markets. A casual knowledge will not get him very far.

For the one-man business-news department, a reporter or editor with sound economic and business background is desirable. He should have an intelligent understanding of the problems of the merchants and manufacturers of his community. He

should be able to make arrangements for reports from other centers, when needed. Most metropolitan newspapers, however, employ four or five men in their business-news departments. One usually follows the developments in retail distribution, one in manufacturing, another the activities in foreign trade, still another in business credit and other fields. Each industry in the community should be rated according to the value of its output and its pay roll and covered accordingly. On most newspapers financial reporters cover news of railroads, utilities, and major industries like steel, copper, and petroleum, but often the line is not strictly drawn. Business-news stories, without financial bearing or details, are often also developed in these fields. Between both departments the coverage must be adequate.

Much business news is produced by government departments, both state and federal, and by trade associations. The local chamber of commerce and community business organizations are also fertile sources. These usually have public-relations counsels or press agents, many of them competent newspapermen, who gather, interpret, and make valuable information available to the press. While much of this may be colored to suit the special interests of the group involved, much of it is strictly factual and may be used as such. The other can be sifted, checked, and rewritten.

To the casual reader the financial and business pages may look unattractive, with their agate tables, and their straightaway, colorless stories, unrelieved by a touch of humor and only rarely brightened by a picture, and then probably the picture of some new executive; but they make interesting reading for those who know what it is all about. The New York Stock Exchange is considered by many people to be one of our best barometers. When it started up suddenly in 1938 it brought new hope and courage to millions of our people. The worker felt more secure in his job. The farmer looked forward to higher prices for his crops. The businessman could make that new commitment. Recovery was on the way. Conditions would be better for every-

body. There would be turkey for Thanksgiving and something to be thankful for; and the children's stockings would be filled at Christmas. We are a highly industrialized people. We are a nation of manufacturers, shopkeepers, and farmers. Prosperity has its ups and its downs. We follow its meanderings in our favorite newspaper.

XII. Sports Editor

AMERICANS take their sports seriously. Millions of them play games for exercise or recreation. Millions make up the great crowds at the sporting spectacles. Millions more gamble on the results of sporting contests. Every kind of game has its fans, who turn to the sports pages of the daily newspaper for full information of the latest game, the coming contest, and their own special heroes.

No phase of American life stirs greater interest. The alumnus of Harvard or Stanford wants the latest information on the prospects of his football team. The newsboy or the taxi driver studies the pennant possibilities of the Giants or the Yankees. The bartender or the barber discusses the chances of the newest challenger of Joe Louis. The Park Avenue debutante gushes over the Greentree polo team. The broker or the banker is almost as much interested in his golf score as he is in the latest quotation for United States Steel. Schoolboys, schoolgirls, and college students follow sports events with boundless zest. The worker in the factory, the clerk in the office, or the physician in the hospital, the judge on the bench, is interested in some form of sport—often his own organization has its baseball, basketball, or bowling team. Rare indeed is the American, and sad is his lot, who does not thrill over physical prowess in athletics of one kind or another.

Americans are readers of sports news. They want not only full details of the games played but also of the training and conditioning of the contestants, with comment and analysis by

experts. Even those who sit through a game or listen to a play-by-play description of it over the radio still insist on a full report of it in their daily newspaper. They have their own opinions of what happened, but they nevertheless want to read about it. They want the opinion of their favorite commentator or expert. They will write in to dispute or to praise the judgment of Grantland Rice, John Kieran, or Joe Williams. Each fan considers himself an authority surpassed by few on his own particular sport.

No class of readers is more responsive. Sports readers demand full coverage and usually get it. Most metropolitan newspapers give from twenty-five to forty-five columns of space daily to sports, and those with Sunday editions usually include a sports section, or supplement, of from sixty to eighty columns. The economizing managing editor who cuts the space available or otherwise curtails his sports coverage is likely to find himself with a rapidly declining circulation. His sports readers simply turn to the newspaper which gives them what they desire.

There has been a tremendous expansion in sports interest in the past two generations, and especially since the World War. Not so long ago baseball, college football, horse racing, and track and field contests were the major sports of the United States. Golf was considered an old man's game, lawn tennis a game for sissies. In those days the small sports staff was active in summer months, and most of its writers were switched to the city staff for the winter. Now the sports staff is active right through the year, with the ending of the season for one sport running into the opening of the other, when the seasons do not coincide or overlap.

A wide range of activities is covered by the sports department of today's metropolitan newspapers. There are baseball, a half-dozen varieties of football, indoor and outdoor polo, ice and field hockey, handball, fencing, boxing, wrestling, trapshooting, archery, lawn tennis, court tennis, hand tennis, squash tennis and rackets, yachting, motorboating, rowing, canoeing, fishing,

swimming, diving, water polo, trotting and running racing, basket ball, billiards, golf, lacrosse, cycling, skiing, walking, tobogganing, snowshoeing, automobile racing, bowling, and all kinds of track and field contests. Then there are horse shows and hunts, dog shows and field trials, Olympic games, chess contests, motorboat shows, field and stream shows, game fishing and hunting, and skating carnivals. Some of these are amateur, some professional, and some both.

Each of these requires expert coverage. Obviously the man who writes about baseball or lacrosse, or any other athletic contest, must know the history of the game, its great exponents in the past, the leading personalities of the present, and he must have a sound working knowledge of the rules, the traditions, customs, and etiquette of the sport with which he is dealing. What is more, he must have the feel of the game. Preferably he should have played it himself. In any case he must have experienced its thrills and understand the enthusiasm of its votaries. He must be able to see it from the viewpoint of the player and from the viewpoint of the interested partisan.

Sports-reporting requires craftsmanship of the highest order. Unfortunately it is not always realized. Much of the best and unquestionably much of the worst writing in American journalism appears in the sports pages. The reason is probably that each sports event is a living drama with its victory and its tragedy, its courage and its human weakness. Often it takes a Damon Runyon, a Paul Gallico, or an Allison Danzig to transfer the drama enacted before his eyes to the printed page for his readers. The thrill of the Dempsey-Firpo match, the technical perfection of a William T. Tilden, 2d, the vivid color and mighty smash of a Babe Ruth, are not easy to catch in words as the edition is rushing to press. The glamour of the scene, the roar of the crowd, the sweat and the heart-throb as victory hangs in the balance, the ultimate triumph or defeat, the strut of the hero and the gameness of the loser, give zest to the contest and drama and action to the story—and mark the master-

piece. The reader who was present can live the scene over again; the reader who was not so fortunate can feel the flush of battle.

More, the sports reporter must give a technically correct interpretation or explanation of how the victory was achieved. He must note the blow when the champion prize fighter was staggered back on his heels. He must analyze the play that let the halfback through the line to score the winning touchdown. He must notice and record Tilden's failure to nick the lines with his old frequency. He must feel the fatigue of age in the legs of the veteran Babe Ruth. He must tell why War Admiral's chances are not so good when he is carrying 132 pounds on a heavy track. He must pulsate to the surging rise of youth and sympathize with the inevitable toll of the passing years. He must appraise where the regular reporter more often only records what happened.

For this reason the sports writer is allowed wide latitude in his work. Generally he writes under his own name, sometimes in the first person, and has his personal following, who look for his views on sports events. In some cases he has his own column to do with much as he pleases. He is allowed to praise and to censure. He forecasts the winner of the prize fight or the pennant, picks the horses to win, place, and show, and disports himself as the expert he and his editors think he is—or should be. Many times he is wrong in his predictions and appraisals, for intangibles enter every field of sport and the underdog with fine courage can defeat the overconfident champion who paid too much attention to newspaper prophets. The wise sports writer knows his limitations and stays well within them. If his specialty is baseball or horse racing he leaves fencing or yachting severely alone, or deals with them only in general terms.

On the whole the sports staffs of most metropolitan newspapers today are made up of men competent to deal with the sports that interest their readers, each man specializing in not more than two or three kinds of sport. Most of them are col-

lege men with a true feeling for words and a facile and graphic style. There is a swing away from the florid and picturesque writing of the predepression days. The trend is toward a straightaway, factual story that pictures and explains the events without straining after effects. The drama of the event is allowed to speak for itself. There is less inspiration and more accuracy.

There is also a definite trend towards plain, ordinary English in sports writing. Perhaps this is the contribution of the college graduate. There was a time, and not so long ago, when the English of the sports pages would scarcely be intelligible on the editorial page. Sports writers employed a jargon of their own and a special terminology that were intended to give color and drama to their stories. Sports writing had a low familiarity that was believed to be dear to the hearts of the fans. In those days the baseball was the "pellet," the "pill," the "apple," or the "horsehide"; the baseball manager the "wizard," the "generalissimo," the "mastermind"; the baseball bat was the "willow" or the "war club"; the left-handed pitcher was "lefty," "port-sider," or "southpaw." Nothing in baseball was known by its dictionary name. The same was true of most other sports. Great teams, great players, great fighters all had a variety of designations. Those for Babe Ruth or Jack Dempsey were particularly endearing or fantastic. The only limit was the imagination and the inventiveness of the writers. Much of this jargon was worn pretty thin as other writers and the public made it their own. Some of it passed into the slang of the time.

Some of the more useful of these "happy phrases" still persist; but generally now the sports writers, excepting in a few yellow newspapers, find the English language as adequate in the sports columns as it is in other pages of the newspaper.

Sports reporting follows a different pattern for afternoon and morning newspapers.

The sports pages of the afternoon newspapers, which may appear on the streets anywhere from 10:00 A.M. until noon, are

devoted largely to gossip and analysis of the contests of the day before, studies of future contests, and a variety of human-interest stories on sports personalities, semieditorial comment on many phases of sports, the output of columnists and cartoonists, and other features. Later in the day these newspapers get out special sports editions giving the latest results at the race track, the latest inning of the baseball game, the latest quarter of the football game, and the latest news of golf, lawn tennis, polo, and other sports, according to the season. Most of this news is written in bulletin form and is displayed on page one, jumping, when necessary, into the sports pages.

The morning newspapers concentrate on spot news of the sports of the afternoon and night. They, too, carry some features, columns, and other comment, especially if spot news happens to be scanty—which is seldom these days. They carry the news of the training camps, of the baseball game, the golf tournament, the tennis match, the hockey game, in complete detail. They have more time to do so, especially on afternoon sports, and so naturally do a more complete job of it in the first instance. On night sports they do the best they can for the early editions and go on to complete the job in later editions. When they have done so they have little space left for anything else.

Speed is of the essence of most firsthand sports reporting. More and more the sports story is being written on the scene, regardless of the facilities or the weather, and is transmitted to the office by telegraph. There is no time for the writer to visit the office to consult his editor. He may, however, ask advice or direction by telegraph or telephone.

On the afternoon newspaper he sends in all the preliminary news he can, news of the crowd, the weather, the line-up of the teams, etc., and then covers the contest over his direct wire as it proceeds. His newspaper is never more than minutes behind the event.

On the morning newspaper the same procedure is followed on most night sports, but on afternoon sports the writer will await

the final result and then write a complete account of it, starting with a lead that gives the result and going right through to tell how it was done.

On important fights and games a blow-by-blow or a play-by-play account may be given by a second reporter. On still more important contests three, four, or five reporters may be employed: one man to do the lead, one the play-by-play, one a technical analysis, one the crowd story, and one or more to deal with other features. Such sports events are infrequent.

The sports staff works under the direction of the sports editor, who is responsible to the managing editor. He generally has an assistant or two and a copy desk of sports experts to edit the news, write headlines for it, and prepare it for publication. He himself operates much like the city editor. He must have a staff that can do an intelligent job, with at least one understudy for each of his sports specialists to take care of days off, vacations, and illness. He must assign his reporters to get the maximum efficiency and the best coverage. He must make sure that they have telegraphic and other facilities to get their stories into the office in time for the edition. He must have competent correspondents in schools, colleges, and cities throughout the country. He must keep them instructed on what he wants in coverage and in space. He must have reporters with his local baseball teams, both in training camps and on the road. He must send men out of town to cover important racing meets, football games, prize fights, and other events. He must have elaborate arrangements for coverage of Olympic games and international yacht racing, with radio connections for the latter. He must anticipate everything, for he is held responsible for the ultimate coverage. Sometimes he may do a column of sports comment himself.

On Saturdays during the football season, on Memorial Day, on the Fourth of July, and on Labor Day, the sports editor of the metropolitan newspaper is undoubtedly the busiest man in America.

He must maintain high standards of sportsmanship in his pages and give a fair showing to all sports interests. He will record the exhibition of bad sportsmanship at the baseball game, the fight with the referee at the football game, the mêlée at the hockey match, the roughhouse tactics at the wrestling match, or the cheering of errors at the tennis match, because these things are news. He will not approve them, nor belittle them, nor attempt to explain them away. He usually stands for clean, vigorous sports and conducts his pages accordingly.

When anywhere from 40,000 to 100,000 persons attend an athletic contest, each a rabid fan, there will probably be as many theories of what happened, unless the contest is overwhelmingly one-sided. Not many of these individuals can be expected to agree in all details with the accounts of it appearing in the sports editor's pages. Many will dispute the referee's competence. Many will feel that some other player was the real hero of the occasion. Others will insist that the loser was robbed of the victory. Feeling often runs high over athletic contests, and sometimes starts arguments that never end.

The much-disputed Tunney-Dempsey fight in Chicago was such an affair. Thousands who witnessed that fight, and millions who did not, still argue over the long count when Tunney was knocked down by Dempsey. Each newspaper carried its own version of it based on the observation of its writers on the scene. Their men at the ringside naturally had a better chance to see what was happening than thousands in distant parts of the field. What is more, they had a chance to talk it over with the referee, with Dempsey and Tunney, and with their managers. They were also familiar with the rules governing the fight and with the instructions to the fighters. Most of the sports experts, while admitting that Tunney profited by it, agreed that Dempsey was wrong and that Tunney and the referee were right—and that Tunney, who went on to win the decision, won it fairly and squarely. But explanations did not mollify partisan Dempsey fans, many of whom lost money on the fight, and the sports edi-

tors received many protests and the writers many a tongue-lashing in speakeasies, clubrooms, and other places where men met in those days.

The sports editor's personal knowledge and judgment on sports must be of the best. It is he who must decide the space required for complete sports coverage and then allot the space for each sport and the important contests in each. He must have an exact feeling for the requirements of his readers. One sports editor will give much space to the international polo matches, the horse show, the dog show, and the yacht races, because his readers will want the full details, while another will concentrate on baseball, football, and hockey. The New York tabloids naturally do not give the same display to golf and tennis that *The New York Times* and the New York *Herald Tribune* do. It would be a waste of valuable space for them; but they will give more prominence to the second-rate prize fight that the other two will play down. The sports editor will try to apportion his space according to his reader interest.

At that he will get into trouble. The sports director of Phillips Andover Academy may write in to assert that his newspaper is giving more space to Phillips Exeter, and append clippings that will show some such score as Exeter, 32 stories, Andover, 11. Or the president of the Alumni Association of some back-water college, or the chairman of its committee of boosters, will protest that the important victories its football team is winning on the gridirons of the nation are being ignored, while Notre Dame and Minnesota and Southern California, which are equally remote, are getting oceans of space. Or some Brooklyn fan will insist that the Dodgers are the gamest and one of the best teams in the National League, while the Giants are getting all the encomiums. A check back on the newspaper's files may show that each of these got the space and display it merited. The chances are, however, that the sports editor will be a little more liberal in the future in an attempt at appeasement.

Much ballyhoo and free publicity appear in even the best

sports sections. Of all departments of the modern newspaper this is the "softest" for the press agents—the easiest to crash. These gentlemen are often professional apostates, former sports editors and by-line writers with wide connections in newspaper offices and an intimate knowledge of newspaper requirements. Their copy is attractive and interesting, but their objective is to sell something, whether it be baseball, football, racing, golf, or billiards. Behind them is the promoter, who profits from the public interest.

Much of sports today is commercial. Few indeed are the athletic contests that do not collect dollars at the gate. Sports is big business that newspaper promotion has made profitable. Press publicity has put across professional hockey and professional football in recent years and crowds Madison Square Garden with paying customers for basketball matches. It is press ballyhoo that makes a hero of the semi-illiterate home-run slugger and the punch-drunk boxing gorilla. It is free publicity that packs them in at the six-day bicycle race, the wrestling match, and the racing meet. Fully 50 per cent of newspaper sports space is given over to news of professional sports—from which some promoter stands to profit handsomely. Newspaper publicity and newspaper promotion produce much of the interest in amateur sports and bring in the dollars at the gate. There have been a few debunkers, men like Dan Parker of the *New York Daily Mirror*, Westbrook Pegler, when on the *Chicago Tribune*, and the late W. O. McGeehan of the *New York Herald Tribune*, but on the whole the press has supplied boosters.

The newspapers have been liberal with sports space in the belief that they were meeting reader interest and thus helping circulation—and this has been true—but they have overlooked the obvious fact that they themselves have created the interest and that often selfish promoters and unscrupulous racketeers have been the principal beneficiaries. American publishers spend millions of dollars annually in sports coverage for which there is little direct financial return to newspapers. The major-league

baseball team will perhaps buy thirty agate lines of advertising space when the team is playing in its home park. Why should it take more when it receives columns of free space on its plans and prospects? The same is true of most other commercialized sports.

Baseball has been the greatest recipient of free newspaper space. In its early days when it was played as a sport and not as a million-dollar business, the newspapers carried stories on the games in the baseball season. Now that it is a major industry interest must be kept alive the year round. The season opens in April and closes in October. Then follows the world series with gate prices raised as much as 500 per cent. Afterwards come the trades, meetings, baseball writers' dinners, and other events, until the opening of the spring training season. The training period in the South, which once took two weeks, is now extended over six or seven weeks, with exhibition games that make it yield a profit. Every move, every word, every game, is spread upon the sports pages of the nation's newspapers. It is the national game, and criticism is something akin to sacrilege. Its common displays of bad sportsmanship, such as "ragging" the batter and arguing with the umpire, are usually overlooked. The manager of Amalgamated Electric may be a tramp so far as the New York press is concerned, but the manager of the Yankees is a local demigod.

Baseball is not the worst offender, and it is scarcely fair to single it out. Boxing is equally bad. Long before Tex Rickard it thrived through build-up in the press. It remained for Rickard to lift this roughneck and gangster-ridden sport to the pastime of the elite—with \$50 ringside tickets, perhaps fifty yards from the fighters. He always worked through free press publicity. He got it in abundance. His slickest effort was the Dempsey-Carpentier fight in Jersey City. What every boxing expert must have known to be a "push over" was hailed as "the Battle of the Century." Carpentier's war record was capitalized. The "orchid man's" prospects were exaggerated to the point where even he

thought he might have a chance. The public interest, built up by sports writers and editors, was intense. *The New York Times*, after months of detailed coverage, devoted 19½ columns of its valuable space to the fight that morning and required 52½ columns to tell the story of the four-round contest the next day. Here was overemphasis with a vengeance, but *The Times* was only meeting the competition of its neighbors. The gate set a record. Mr. Rickard made a profit.

Probably the worst of all, so far as newspapers are concerned, are the winter promoters of tennis and golf tournaments and swimming meets. The owners of a winter resort need business. To get it they must become known through the country, especially in the frigid North. Normally they would go to an advertising agency and pay for an advertising campaign in newspapers and magazines glorifying what they have to offer in sunshine, weather, sports, and comfort. But that costs real money and would be profitable to some of the newspapers. Instead they employ a promoter and a press agent. They stage a tournament with prizes large enough to entice first-class talent. Then they get free newspaper publicity. The tournament or meet is held. For weeks before there are announcements of it in the sports pages, and on the five or six days it lasts there are detailed stories daily telling of its progress and its ultimate winner. That resort gets free advertising that it could not buy for a million dollars, and advertising of the best kind. Its future success is assured. The promoter and the press agent get their salaries. They earned them. The newspapers pay their bills for white paper, labor, and telegraphic tolls.

The situation in other commercial sports is different only in degree. Take billiards or bowling, for instance. The manufacturers will advertise in the magazines, but not in the newspapers. It is not necessary. Instead they will stage a tournament, frequently guaranteeing the sponsor's expenses and paying for the leading players, and they will get their advertising for nothing on the sports pages. There are only a few sections of the

country where free ballyhoo is reduced to a minimum and commercial promoters are forced to pay for their advance announcements. In England, France, Italy, and elsewhere the newspapers manage to get along with very little advance sports publicity.

The remedy for American sports editors, however, is not simple. In New York and other cities of the United States and Canada the dollars-and-cents promoters and the sports fans have been spoiled. Sports editors go so far as to print the train schedules to tennis matches, boxing matches, and football games, even making it unnecessary for the profiting railroads to buy advertising space. The newspapers have stimulated public interest to the point where it is almost impossible for them to stop, certainly not without vigorous protest from many readers. If one should try it, it may be sure others will not. They have built themselves a monster that consumes their space and gives them little in return in profit or gratitude.

It seems obvious that editors should give more space to amateur sports, to the players who are there for the love of the game, and less to the commercial athletes who are there for the dollars that are in it. A frank confession of an intolerable condition might convince the fans. Then the newspapers might carry through to the extent of refusing all the "passes," and free transportation, the drinks, etc., that are lavished so "generously" on their reporters. Some do not accept them now, preferring the honorable way of paying their own way, and praising or censuring when and where they feel it is warranted, without charges of ingratitude or violation of "hospitality." It is insulting to the press of the nation to have men like a former manager of the New York Giants intimate that they pay for the newspaper correspondents and expect them to do their bidding.

Most sports writers and reporters are clean and decent and maintain high standards. On metropolitan newspapers they are among the highest-paid members of the staff and are expected to do an honest job. There are exceptions, however, and if half the ugly rumors in the profession have any basis in truth the

exceptions are not so few. Certainly the crooked sports reporter has ample opportunity to accept graft. Sports like racing and boxing and wrestling are infested with gangsters and racketeers and gamblers. In some instances they dominate the game. There have been many reports, evidently with some basis of fact, of pay rolls for the newspaper writers. Doubtless the thug who will dope a race horse or rig a fight will not stop at bribing a reporter. Where big money is involved, there also is temptation. A favorable newspaper story can mean thousands of dollars to a promoter.

The sports writer is frequently thrown in with a fast-spending crowd. The reporter covering yachting, racing, polo, prize fighting, golf, or any one of a dozen other kinds of sports will find himself with the easy-money boys. Some of these inherited money in large amounts, others make it easily and honestly, and many more make it easily and dishonestly. They have it to spend, and do. The reporter quite naturally wants to hold up his own end. The younger reporter of small salary and easy conscience may be tempted to accept gratuities. He probably begins by taking all the "hospitality" in sight. He ends by being another pawn in the racket of fixing games or races or matches, a contemptible creature ashamed of his honest colleagues and a disgrace to his profession. When cheap gamblers will fix a world series, one may be sure that they will not turn down any way of making a crooked dollar. Most professional gamblers never place their money on anything that is not fixed.

This must not be taken as an indictment of sports writers. These are the exceptions, some of them are highly placed. Even one would be one too many. All reporters and for that matter all editors are at times faced with the temptation of unwanted hospitality and bribery, big or little. The night city editor of *The New York Times* a few years ago was offered \$100,000 to leave a story out of the paper. He had it exclusively. He ran it. With the possible exception of the Wall Street reporters, the sports reporters and editors are more constantly

confronted with bribery and corruption than others. If cheap gamblers and unethical promoters suspect that a reporter or an editor can be fixed, one may be certain that they will attempt it. It is a credit to the profession that the sports pages are as clean and objective as they are. There has been a steady improvement in the past generation. Many of the harlots have gone the way of all flesh, and their successors have brought higher ethics.

It is not always easy to maintain high standards. The late Bernard Thomson, for more than two decades the sports editor of *The New York Times*, attended few sports events and made it a rule, almost without an exception, never to see anyone connected with sports promotion. Press agents fumed, promoters resented his abrupt refusal of hospitality, and many sportsmen accused him of being "high hat." It did not matter. He was determined to keep his staff and his pages clean. He did.

Personal journalism is still rampant on the sports pages. Columnists range over the whole field of sport according to their individual whims. Many of these men are a credit to sports and to journalism, but others have more conceit than ethics. They often wander far from the sports pasture and may discuss any problem from their latest hang-over to the newest outburst of Nazi culture. There is much back-scratching among this fraternity: "You scratch my back and I will scratch yours." There is also the personal vendetta. The whole pack may turn on one sports victim and tear him limb from limb. Fortunately they more often overpraise, and give some rising athlete a reputation far beyond his worth. The sports readers seem to like it, and many of these writers have large followings.

There is a tendency in sports writing to overpraise the newest. There always was, and there probably always will be. The new quarterback for Yale is hailed as the greatest ever. The new "shuffling bomber" is the greatest puncher ever to stand in a ring. The latest world champions are the finest baseball team ever to appear in the Yankee Stadium. Sports writers have short

memories. Perhaps it is all for the best. Certainly the last generation has seen great athletics. With Babe Ruth, Jack Dempsey, Helen Wills Moody, William T. Tilden, 2d, Walter Hagen, Harold S. Vanderbilt, and Glenn Cunningham to write about, superlatives were certainly in order, and a generous crop of them bloomed in the sports pages of the American press. The great athlete has always had his full meed of praise. The "punk" ultimately is proved to be what he is.

Then there are the office promotions, occasions in which the newspaper itself promotes an athletic contest. These are generally sponsored publicly in the interest of "sweet charity," or pure sports. More often they are circulation snatchers and are originated by the circulation or promotion department. They take many forms—a baseball or football game, a skating contest, a boxing match, or a boxing tournament, or whatnot. In many cases they serve a public good, even if the promotion costs are high and the receipts for charity low, but always they lead to overemphasis in the sports pages. Here is ballyhoo gone mad. Every little detail is exaggerated. Every person involved is lauded to the skies. News standards go by the board. Later a photograph of the packed arena or stadium may be displayed in an advertisement in *Editor and Publisher*, where all the advertising agencies can see it, to prove the drawing power of the newspaper.

Great sports sections are not numerous. Where they exist they are the result of high ideals and a genuine love of sports. Their editors and their staffs see through the shams and the dollar grabbers. They feature the genuine sportsman. They glorify the clean sportsman who plays the game for the love of it, the man who wins modestly and loses gamely and cleanly. They live and write with the same code of ethics that animates the city staff and the Washington staff on the high-class newspaper. Their news standards are equally exacting.

They bring the best professional efficiency to their work. It takes splendid organization and co-ordination to cover sports

news. Nowhere are greater speed, good reporting, and sound judgment more essential. How the sports staff covers a major athletic contest close to the edition deadline was told in detail in Chapter II. All the best of our age in inventiveness and efficiency is capitalized to deliver sports news fresh to the reader. Minutes after the contest is over the spectators can read all about it in their newspapers. The fans take it for granted; yet even for those who make newspapers it remains a remarkable process.

XIII. Critics

THE FURTHER we move from our frontier days, the more we turn to the cultural side of life. The growth of interest in the arts in America in the past half-century is in itself a fascinating story, a story in which the press is one of the major characters. From our early days the newspapers have given generously of their space and their means to promote music, the drama, the dance, literature, painting, and sculpture. In later years they have stressed the cultural importance of motion pictures and the radio. Merit in the arts has seldom failed to bring quick recognition.

Significant developments in the arts have been covered as news, and the newspapers have provided critics, men of wide experience and sound judgment in their fields, to interpret the artistic performances for the public and to discriminate between the good and the bad. The newspapers have done their job well, and their failings more often than not can be attributed to an overenthusiasm, an overzealousness, that gave praise to mediocrity. The indifferent has been exalted more often than the sublime has been ignored.

Critics like James Gibbons Huneker, William Winter, Henry E. Krehbiel, Lawrence Gilman, Philip Hale, to mention only five, played important roles in the promotion of good taste in the arts in America. They worked for newspapers, which paid their salaries and printed their output. They drew their inspiration, as well as their sustenance, from a free press that gave them economic and editorial freedom to observe and write, to

praise and condemn, as they felt the occasion required. Their successors on many newspapers today are continuing in their tradition.

There was a time, and not so long ago, when interest in the arts in America was left largely to so-called society and a few connoisseurs. It was a specious interest. It was the proper thing to do. Today millions of Americans look to the arts for pleasure and relaxation. Many more depend on them for a livelihood. Schools and colleges, the motion pictures and the radio, as well as the newspapers, have served to spread a higher appreciation of culture. Now America can offer more understanding and more encouragement to the workers in music, in the drama, in the dance, in literature, in motion pictures, in painting, and in sculpture, than any other country, with the possible exception of France—and incidentally more remuneration. Our audiences are at once the most critical and the most sympathetic.

Circumstances in the past quarter-century have conspired to make the United States the cultural center of the world. The cataclysmic World War, with stifling influence of the dictatorships, and our material wealth and new leisure, have driven or brought most of the great artists to our shores. The Hitler and Stalin wars further accentuated the movement. Some, like Thomas Mann and Arturo Toscanini, needed the free air of America. Others wanted only our dollars. No career today is complete that has not had its American triumphs. A Kirsten Flagstad can sing in Northern Europe for two decades, but two performances in New York bring her world recognition and acclaim. Our good taste is now generally conceded, however reluctantly.

Where else, for instance, can one hear such music? The Metropolitan Opera alone of the operas of the world gives each performance of each opera in the original language of the composer and provides an understanding audience for each. The New York Philharmonic-Symphony, the Philadelphia, and the Boston Symphony Orchestras are recognized among the world's

great orchestras. Toscanini broadcasts weekly over a national chain of radio stations. So do the Metropolitan Opera and the Philharmonic. Outstanding artists like Fritz Kreisler and Sergei Rachmaninoff perform before huge audiences. Schools of music with ample endowments, like the Juilliard, the Curtis, and the Rochester, instruct thousands of students and turn out accomplished artists. The American public is music-conscious. It wants the best.

The same is true in large measure of the other arts. Since 1930 three of our writers, Sinclair Lewis, Eugene O'Neill, and Pearl Buck, have won the Nobel prize for literature. A dozen others are among the world-leaders. Our publishers turn out a steady flow of books. In the drama we have always held our own, and while there was a decline of Broadway for a time, it was due more to the ineptitude of our producers than to lack of competent dramatists and actors. At that we manage to see the best in the drama, whether it has its origin in London, Paris, Berlin, Moscow, or Prague. In motion pictures we play a leading rôle. England, France, Germany, and Russia have tried their hands at the cinema, but at their best they still fall short of Hollywood. We need not be modest about our sculpture, with artists like George Grey Barnard, Paul Manship, Hermon Atkins MacNeil, and a dozen others. In painting we can hold our heads high, while in architecture we have struck out along new lines and revolutionized both its form and its materials. For the most part we have followed European models in the arts, but more and more we are developing a culture that is rooted in our soil.

Metropolitan newspapers have played their part in the conduct of American arts. From year to year they have devoted more space to cultural subjects. They have enlarged their staffs to assure adequate coverage. Once one overworked critic would cover music and another the theater; today each field requires a staff of three, four, or five men. Many metropolitan newspapers give two or three columns to book reviews and book news, and

some, like the New York *Herald Tribune* and *The New York Times*, print special book supplements on Sundays. Many newspapers employ experts to deal with painting and sculpture, reporting the various shows or exhibits, the acquisitions by museums, and the purchases of private collectors. A few have experts in the dance, who can write intelligently and knowingly on that reborn art. Almost all important newspapers have staffs to deal with the motion pictures, reporting on developments in that glamorous medium of expression and commenting on the artistic and technical merits of individual pictures. Nor has the radio been neglected; it also has its reporters and its critics, and the Toscanini broadcasts brought a rush of music critics to the loud-speakers. The advent of television will find the newspapers ready. The reading public looks to the newspapers for guidance in its cultural interests and in its entertainment. It even seeks, and gets, the latest information on the floor shows of night clubs.

Two separate techniques are required in the covering of the arts. So far as is possible they are kept distinct, although at times they overlap. One is objective reporting, the other editorial and expert criticism. The reporter tells what is happening in his special field, covering new productions, future events, and the activities of its leading personalities. He works with city-desk news standards. The critic writes of his individual reaction to the performance and the artists, praising or censuring as he feels the occasion demands. He is allowed great latitude. Writing under his by-line he must accept responsibility along with his editors and his newspaper for the final result. It does happen, however, that some occasions may call for both techniques. It may be necessary to tell what happened, and then appraise its artistic merit. In a few cases the event may warrant separating these into two stories.

Such an occasion is the annual opening of the Metropolitan Opera's season. This is the most colorful social and artistic event of the New York year. A music-news reporter will write of the event itself, covering its larger aspects. The music critic will deal

with the performance on the stage and in the orchestra pit. A society reporter will list the important personages present. A style expert will report on the new fashions in gowns, coiffures, furs, and jewels. Scores of press photographers will be busy both behind and in front of the curtain. The morning newspapers will have a page or more of interesting news and pictures.

Obviously both the reporters and the critics of the arts must be men and women with special equipment, each in his or her own field. They must have the knowledge and the experience to write authoritatively of their subject, and those entrusted with the criticism must have an extensive background and sound judgment against which to measure the performance being reviewed. As a general practice the music, drama, or movie department is directed by an editor, probably himself the "second-string" critic, who is responsible for news coverage and assigns all the other men, excepting the first critic. This editor operates much like a city editor, and "makes up" his Saturday or Sunday feature pages. The critic is generally left free to choose his own assignments. Almost always he selects the major events of the day or the most significant.

Veterans on *The New York Times* remember the time Huneker was sent to review a performance against his better judgment. It was a charity affair sponsored by Park Avenue ladies. It was strong on good intentions and weak on art. Someone got the unhappy idea that a review by Huneker was just what the ladies needed. All were impressed by the prestige of his name and fame. Some influence was used. ~~The great critic was ap-~~proached and received the suggestion coldly. One afternoon he arrived at the office only to find that he had been assigned to the job.

He was a true newspaperman. He went. He sat through the complete performance. He returned to the office and did his review. It consisted of two sentences. The first simply stated that such a performance had been held at such a place. The second characterized it in language that was not fit to print. He turned

it in to his editor, put on his coat and hat, and left for his home in "Flatbush-by-the-C" (the "C" standing for cemeteries). That was the last time such an assignment was made.

Editors are always impressed by the independence of the critics, almost as much as they are by the exotic words they weave into reviews. Editors are often forced to run to the dictionary, and when they find the word there, they invariably learn that the critic used it in its precise meaning and that no other word would quite express the idea. Sometimes an editor fails to find the word, and he may be pardoned for wondering why the 500,000 words in his dictionary with their 5,000,000 shades of meaning cannot amply express the critic's thoughts on the subject concerned—which of course they cannot. He may chase one of these words through technical books and on occasion discover that a new word has been invented, thus further enriching the language. Naturally the editor holds the critic in some awe, and especially so when he attempts to protest on some trivial matter, only to be confounded by a barrage of technical terms that is beyond all comprehension.

So it was with the editor who is writing these lines. When he came to the matter of explaining the necessary background for sound criticism he decided to turn to the critics themselves. As he could not in the space available deal with all the arts, he selected music as at once the most interesting and most widely accepted by the public and also the most technical. The equipment needed for music criticism is a fair example of them all. After long consideration and with some trepidation he approached Olin Downes, the distinguished music critic of *The New York Times*. He found Mr. Downes affable and co-operative, as he always is.

"But kindly use these words in your own way," stipulated Mr. Downes, "and don't hold me to bad and hasty phraseology."

What follows, as the Washington correspondent says when he wants to impress his editor with the fact that his story comes

from the highest of high authorities, is "straight from the feed-bag":

Background for musical criticism necessitates the capacity at least to read scores with facility and to detect by ear such details as pitch, change of tempo, harmonic style, etc. It demands an acquaintance with the music of the past four centuries. It requires a sound fundamental knowledge of harmony and counterpoint and the main musical forms and their evolution. The critic should know the technical principles of the voice and of at least one instrument—preferably three, including a keyed instrument and a wind instrument. These things are elementary. He should also have some conception of the culture outside his specialized field but related to it, and some realization of the world of affairs and ideas in which he lives.

The editor interrupted to remark that he had seen Frank Perkins of the New York *Herald Tribune* seated in the back of the Metropolitan Opera House checking a majestic performance of *Die Götterdämmerung* against the score, note by note. The interruption was ignored.

The critic must be able to write clearly and in an interesting style and with a consciousness of the principles of effective journalism. He must address a larger audience than the one which is especially interested in music. He must reach the general reader and let him know how fascinating are the things which occur in the opera house and the concert hall.

He must use sound judgment in considering the actual conditions, apparent or not, that affect the performance under discussion. In one sense the critic is concerned only with what he hears and sees but in another, and a very real and human sense, he must weigh the circumstances.

For example, a young concert artist who shows immaturity and insecurity due to lack of experience should be treated more considerately than the artist of international reputation who gives a poor performance. An orchestra in a small city which is striving to get on a firm basis and gain a permanent public

should not be treated with the same uncompromising insistence on high standards as the Philadelphia Orchestra or the Philharmonic-Symphony. When Ignace Paderewski made his final tour of America, he most certainly did not play with his old technical perfection, but it would be a narrow-minded and narrow-horized critic who failed in reviewing his concerts to impress his readers with the greatness of the man's achievements and the revealing spirit which existed in his playing.

Or say that an orchestra conductor in a community is inadequate to his task, yet is engaged for several seasons. If the critic tells the whole unfortunate truth every time this man gives a concert, the critic may be doing what he should do, but he will defeat his own purpose, because his readers will get the impression that he is "down" on the conductor and never misses an opportunity to abuse him. The critic can treat this situation more adroitly by failure to praise his performances and by indifferent notices. His readers will soon realize that this is not a conductor who measures up to the best standards. The time will ultimately come to strike effectively. Then the critic who has been tolerant and good-natured will be likely to have the support of the music public. For his readers will reason that if a critic ordinarily so fair-minded is unable to refrain from devastating comment, then indeed the conductor must be pretty bad.

The critic can approach his task from various points of view. There is the critic whose principal purpose is to coin some felicitous bon mots. There is the critic who carries a chip on his shoulder. There is the critic who is unutterably bored. There is the critic who wants to impress his readers with his own erudition. There is the critic who praises almost everything he hears or sees. The most desirable approach is that of the critic who is trying to the best of his ability honestly to evaluate the talent of each artist and the merits of each concert or performance. The reviewer does not write for the benefit of the artist. He writes for his newspaper's readers.

The human equation enters most performances. The young

singer or violinist has spent years in studying. His family has made great sacrifices and has corresponding hopes. Perhaps he lacks what it takes to reach real greatness. The criticism can be kindly and yet effective. Or it can be brutal. The preferable method is understatement or omission. The review can include what kind things can be said truthfully, leaving the reader to notice how much was left unsaid.

Then there are some cases where pretentiousness and ignorance need to be deflated. A tenor comes along who trumpets himself as Caruso's successor. He is no such thing. He distorts his reviews, advertising words of praise extracted from them without regard to the context. He employs a battery of press agents and a claque. He attempts to give the music public a false impression of his gifts and to cash in on its gullibility. Then the critic may, and usually does, speak out, not in personal pique, but in the public's interest.

The critic's real boss is the public, just as much as the President's real boss is the American people. He should never forget it. Anyone who addresses the public on any subject comes under the working of this principle.

The music critic who fulfils his obligations to his public must come to his job with proper equipment. First, he must be a firmly grounded musician himself. Second, he must be an authoritative and interesting writer. Third, he must be a man of balance and some aptitude for public relations and human affairs. Fourth, he must be honorable.

The true value and force of a critical review will ultimately be the measure of the man who wrote it; and he will be judged by the quality of his mind and the responsiveness of his nature as well as by his knowledge and his skill in writing.

Having fared so well with Mr. Downes, the editor felt that it might be well to follow the same procedure on music news reporting. Here he was on surer ground, and so with more confidence he approached Howard Taubman, the music editor of

The New York Times. He found Mr. Taubman equally affable and co-operative. What follows is more or less the result:

The music critic as well as the music reporter must always remember that he is working for a newspaper, and that it prints news as well as reviews. Most news comes in from producers, managers, artists, and their press agents. That is disposed of in the normal routine way. But there is always music news in the making, and the critic and the music reporter should have a nose for it. Music does not move in a vacuum. Often it is bound up with municipal, national, and international events. The capable music reporter interests himself in all these affairs and is prepared to go after the story when his own specialty becomes involved in the larger framework of other events.

For instance it was known that Toscanini, in protest at Nazi regimentation, had declined to conduct the Wagner festivals at Bayreuth. When Hitler entered Austria Toscanini was in New York. He and his broadcasts were receiving wide acclaim. An alert music reporter would realize immediately that Toscanini would also quit the Salzburg festival. The conductor is nothing if not consistent. That reporter would go after the story. But how to get it? Toscanini does not welcome the press. He does not talk. But he has intimate friends who know his mind and his plans. The reporter soon finds that his hunch is correct; that in fact the maestro has already drafted the telegram. His newspaper has the story before the official announcement.

Some critics, however, have concerned themselves so rigidly with their jobs of being critics that they miss good news stories right on the stage in front of them. Such an incident occurred some years ago at a concert in New York. Ethel Leginska, pianist, composer, and conductor, was to direct the orchestra. The critics were in their seats at concert time. The members of the orchestra were in their places. The conductor did not appear. More minutes passed and still no conductor. All the critics but one remained in their seats fretting at the delay. That one critic went backstage to make inquiries. He learned that Mme. Legin-

ska had not arrived at the concert hall. A telephone call to her hotel disclosed that she was not there. He soon discovered that no one knew where she was, and that the concert would have to be canceled. Mme. Leginska had disappeared without explanation. He got his city editor on the telephone. The latter went to work, and their newspaper had the story in the next edition—an exclusive story.

Another such story broke at the Metropolitan Opera during the visit of Dino Grandi, then foreign minister of Italy, to the United States. He attended the opera. In one of the intermission periods the orchestra played the Italian national anthem in his honor. Grandi stood up and gave the Fascist salute. As he did so a shower of small pieces of paper descended from the balconies. The papers bore inscriptions: "Viva Toscanini!" "Down with Mussolini!" "Down with Grandi!" The story was obvious. One critic rushed to the telephone and informed his office. The others considered this merely an interesting incident. It was, and it made an exclusive page-one story.

Music provides much interesting reading. Its production is always fascinating and many of its personages are colorful both on and off the stage. It has a large public following. It inspires an affection and provides a glamour that few things do. The Metropolitan Opera is one of the most fertile news sources in America. The competent reporter knows it from the front office to the stage door. He knows the personnel from the general manager to the ushers. The same is true in lesser degree of Carnegie Hall and of the great orchestras. The concert managers, the artists' managers, the press agents, all have news to give, and often it is interesting news. No one knows where the next story breaks, and the live music reporter has friends everywhere to protect him.

Just recently one of the important men of the country dropped dead in his box in the Metropolitan Opera. As it was a repeat performance, the newspapers were not represented. One of the ushers tried to reach a music reporter by telephone. The

see so many bad and indifferent plays that he despairs of ever seeing a good one. The book critic must wade through an ocean of twaddle. The movie critic must see all the inanities of Hollywood. Small wonder that when they meet something good they are inclined to overpraise.

The critic on the metropolitan newspaper has one great advantage: he has almost complete freedom of expression. Short of libel and within the bounds of decency he is free to give his honest reactions. Editors do, of course, expect their critics to confine themselves to the performance under consideration. And this is most often their one point of conflict, for critics have a habit of criticizing the audience or going off into the fields of economics, politics, religion, or philosophy. The critic's opinions on these subjects are often interesting and important to him but rarely to the newspaper's readers. When the performance deals with these things, it is different.

At that the adroit critic can write much as he pleases, for it is often not what he says but how he says it that counts. Many take pleasure in seeing how far they can go; how much they can get past their editors. One famous New York critic has a superb collection of expressions he could not get into his newspaper and of expressions he did. It is much admired by the juniors, and their attempts at a similar hobby have got not a few of them into difficulties.

The managing editor on the modern newspaper knows that his critic's reviews are worthless unless they are the honest expression of the critic's opinions. For that reason he rarely interferes, and when he does require a review to be done over he has the same critic do it. Still more rarely does he kill a review. And when he does, he usually replaces it with a straight news story telling of the performance but expressing no opinion on it. This has happened only once on *The New York Times* in the memory of its present editors. There are occasions when the pressure of space may force a minor review out of a newspaper. While the newspaper must necessarily share responsibility with the

aptitude increases and their knowledge widens they are assigned to more important news or to cover minor performances. After a long and successful apprenticeship they may be promoted to be the departmental editor or the first-line critic. It is usually a long hard road, and while many may be tried out few are chosen. At best it takes years of training and study to reach the top.

A few critics are recruited direct from the field of their special knowledge. There have been many sad experiences, for the journalistic technique is not easy and offers a difficult hurdle for the amateur. Huneker was a music teacher. Downes was a city-staff reporter in Boston. John Chamberlain was a reporter and a good one before he bloomed as a writer on current literature.

Once established as a writer on one phase of art it is seldom that one makes good in another. Huneker at various times wrote on the drama and on books, but in his last days he returned to music, his first love. Gilbert Gabriel was music critic for the old *Evening Sun* before he became drama critic for the Hearst newspapers. Brooks Atkinson was editor of the book review section of *The New York Times* before he was made its drama critic. These are the exceptions. As a general rule the drama critic remains just that and the book reviewer sticks to his books.

Seldom is a critic asked to work outside his own specialty. One such case is worthy of mention. William B. Chase, a music critic for forty years, was conscripted to cover the opening of *Abie's Irish Rose* for *The New York Times*. Of all the observers present that memorable night he alone appreciated its human qualities and he alone forecast its record-breaking run on Broadway.

The work of the critic is never easy, and never a complete joy. No matter what his field he must deal with a vast amount of mediocrity. The more cultivated his personal taste the more painful his experience can be. The music critic must listen to never-ending scraping of violins and pounding of pianos by youths with more ambition than talent. The drama critic must

see so many bad and indifferent plays that he despairs of ever seeing a good one. The book critic must wade through an ocean of twaddle. The movie critic must see all the inanities of Hollywood. Small wonder that when they meet something good they are inclined to overpraise.

The critic on the metropolitan newspaper has one great advantage: he has almost complete freedom of expression. Short of libel and within the bounds of decency he is free to give his honest reactions. Editors do, of course, expect their critics to confine themselves to the performance under consideration. And this is most often their one point of conflict, for critics have a habit of criticizing the audience or going off into the fields of economics, politics, religion, or philosophy. The critic's opinions on these subjects are often interesting and important to him but rarely to the newspaper's readers. When the performance deals with these things, it is different.

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critic, most editors want the critic to bear the primary responsibility. So the editor either uses the review as it is or leaves it out.

There was an occasion some years ago in Montreal when this was not done, and the consequences were sad. Montreal at that time was a one-week city, that is, plays were booked for one week, and good or bad they started on Monday nights and ran through until the closing on Saturday night, to be replaced by another performance. The result was that all the reviews had to be done on Monday nights, and when two or three openings took place the drama critic would take his pick and other members of the staff would do the others. These assignments were always welcomed by reporters, for it gave them and their lady friends a pleasant evening.

On one such assignment a reporter was sent to cover a musical comedy at His Majesty's Theatre. He took his best girl along. They arrived early and sat down in good seats for a happy evening. But the performance was terrible. They barely survived the first act, and then departed. The reporter returned to his office and did a brief review—just a paragraph—but it said enough. It expressed the conviction that there was no music in this musical comedy worth singing, and that, even if there were, there was no one in the cast who could sing it. He turned in his review to his city editor.

Now this city editor was of the Caspar Milquetoast type. There are such animals; fortunately only a few. He read the brief review. He had a fit. He recovered sufficiently to ask for the program. He gave it to a rewrite man with instructions to do a new review, praising the cast, the music, the libretto, and anything else he could think of. This review appeared the next morning.

All the other newspapers in the city dealt with this performance in severe terms. One used the headline: "A sad night at His Majesty's." Nowhere else was there a word of praise. The theater manager also had a fit—of a different sort. He threw the whole troupe out of the theater, and it remained dark for the

rest of the week, setting a new precedent for theatrical Montreal.

Then it was the managing editor's turn to have a fit. He quickly learned the facts; and he issued instructions that henceforth reviews would be used as written or not at all.

The critic in each field has his own particular problems. Music and the drama offer the advantage of short seasons. Their critics get long vacations to overcome the wear and tear of one season before the opening of the next. The spread of the barn-theater movement and the founding of open-air music festivals have, however, invaded their summer calm in recent years. The cinema critic has a constant flow of productions from month to month and is fortunate when he gets a few weeks' rest. Often he takes advantage of his scanty vacations to visit Hollywood for firsthand observation on the movie lots. The book critic also gets little leisure. While there are fall and spring seasons for publishing, when most of the best books appear, he usually has a column a day to fill or a page for Saturday or Sunday or a special weekly supplement.

Of them all the book critics are the most to be pitied. Generally they must read a book every working day, a form of torture that would do credit to Dante. The conscientious critics do read them. Other critics write only what the occasion requires or what their enthusiasm suggests; the book critic nearly always has a specified space to fill. In selecting a book to review, he naturally hopes it will warrant the space. Often he is disappointed. He, too, would like to dispose of the job with a paragraph or two. He often finds that in all conscience he cannot stretch it to the required length. He must read a second one just as a space filler.

Book reviewing does have compensations that at times make it tolerable. The book critic covers the wide sweep of contemporary thought, even if he may have little time to deliberate much about it. He meets all the best minds. He deals with all the problems of modern life. He sees all sides of all subjects.

Then on rare occasions he has the great joy of discovery, and it is his privilege to be the first to hail the rising genius.

Such an experience brightened the life of one much-harassed book critic some years ago. This particular critic had to fill a column a day and a whole page on Saturdays. He read books seven days a week from early morning until late at night. He read books until he was groggy, like a punch-drunk fighter. Just one hour before the deadline for one Saturday edition, he was informed by his managing editor that he must do another review. There was a hole to fill in his page. He staggered into his sanctum. He scanned the row of new books on his shelves. He picked out the thinnest he could find and sat down at his desk for the irksome task. He had a quarter of an hour to glance through the book, another quarter of an hour to do the review, so that it could be set in type and proof-corrected for the edition. Three-quarters of an hour later the editor found him still reading and completely oblivious to time and editions. He missed the edition with the review, but the next Monday he had a glorious review of James Stephens's *Crock of Gold*. He was the first in America to discover the great new Irish writer. And with pride he watched the author's rise to world-recognition.

The choice of books for review reflects the interests of the newspaper's readers. Books deal with the great motivating trends of the time. For instance, the World War was followed by hundreds of books on European affairs. The rise of the dictatorships of Europe and their ideologies brought forth as many more. The depression and the New Deal gave birth to many books on economics, social security, housing, and economic planning. Such books found ready reviewers, for the readers of most serious newspapers were gravely interested in these subjects. As our national and international problems change, so will our books, and our reviews.

Almost every important book these days is published with a release date. The reviewer receives his copy of a book some days in advance and in ample time for him to read and digest it.

This release is always honored, with the result that critical notice of the book will be published in dozens of newspapers on the same day. The ordinary novel, and for that matter the ordinary non-fiction book, gets scant notice. Even newspapers like the New York *Herald Tribune* and *The New York Times* will not review more than one-fifth of the books published in a year. Only the works of the outstanding novelists and poets can claim critical review.

The critic, too, has his critics. His words of praise seldom evoke gratitude, being accepted as the proper thing, while his censure often brings resentment. The actor or singer can nurse malice in his soul. The painter and sculptor never forgives. The author often wants equal space for a reply. The honest and fearless critic makes enemies, many of whom consider themselves above him, the mere scrivener, while they are the creators of a great art. They can and do hit back. They originate and help to spread belittling rumors about him in his special field which grow as they pass from mouth to mouth. They write to his editors and his publisher. They even bring pressure to bear on the business office. Theatrical producers and book publishers cancel advertising contracts. Critics have been barred from theaters; they have been sued for libel. In all cases the honest critic has won out, his tribe has multiplied, and he is now considered a vital part of intellectual America.

It should be observed in conclusion that all forms of art, unlike most other news sources, yield substantial revenue for the newspaper's business office. The motion pictures are the most liberal in their advertising budgets. The book publishers are probably next, although the theater is always well represented in New York. Even the private art galleries and the art sales make their announcements in the paid advertisements. In nearly all cases the financial balance is well in favor of the publisher.

XIV. The News Services

AMERICAN daily newspapers, with a few minor exceptions, take a large part of their news from one or more of the great news or press services. A flood of state, national, and foreign news pours into newspaper offices over telegraph wires from the central offices of the news services and is handed to the editors. This furnishes the backbone of the news budget that most newspapers present to their readers daily. The smaller newspapers depend on it entirely for all but local news; the larger supplement it with their own output; while a few great metropolitan dailies use it to supplement the output of their own news-gathering organizations. No newspaper that tries to present a complete news picture would dare attempt publication without one of the news services.

The reading public is familiar with the names of the Associated Press, the United Press, and the International News Service, for either these names or their initials, A.P., U.P., and I.N.S., appear above scores of stories daily in newspapers. Yet few readers are familiar with these organizations, or with the work they do or the ideals and traditions that guide them. Nor do Americans realize that these organizations are unique—excepting for the Canadian Press and the Australian Press Association, which are modeled after them—among the great news-gathering agencies of the world, in that they alone are independent politically and financially, and in that they alone try to cover the news without bias or propaganda. Presenting factual news objectively and fairly, they help to elevate the whole press of the United States.

Take a look at the news services of other countries. Havas, serving France and the French colonies, is subsidized by the French government. The Deutsches Nachrichten Büro, known as DNB, serving Germany, is a semiofficial organization working under the direction of the propaganda ministry. Tass, serving Russia, is completely dominated by the Soviet government. Stefani does the bidding and carries the propaganda of the Italian government, as does Domei for the Japanese Empire. Even Reuters, serving Great Britain, is largely influenced by the British government and reflects British opinion. All these agencies, even in peacetimes, are more or less instruments of national policy and national propaganda. With the possible exceptions of Havas and Reuters, they consider national interest first and the news next.

Besides the Big Three there are a score of other news-gathering organizations in the United States, but they deal mostly with some particular kind of news or group interest and do not attempt complete and objective world coverage. Some of these cover news for the religious press; some for labor organs; others for the radical newspapers; and others for various limited fields. Their special interests usually color their stories and determine their output. Only the Big Three will be considered in these pages, because of the limited space. American newspapers of general circulation and American readers must depend on them. Even readers of the class press turn to the regular daily newspapers for news outside their own fields.

Now let us take a look at each of these three news services.

The present Associated Press is a co-operative organization with 1,437 member newspapers, divided approximately in the ratio of three afternoon newspapers to one morning newspaper. The original Associated Press was founded in 1848. It led a hectic life for several decades. In 1893, while it was known as the United Press, it was divided by an internal revolt. There had long been dissatisfaction with its news output. A money-making organization, it was accused of being venal. Supposed to carry the truth only, it was accused of being a medium for

Wall Street propaganda. Finally Western publishers set up their own organization, called it the Associated Press, and attempted to gather and distribute news on a co-operative basis, each member sharing the cost and contributing the news of spontaneous origin in his own community. What was left of the United Press continued for a short time and then gave up, leaving the Associated Press a clear field. At the turn of the century the Illinois Supreme Court ruled that the Associated Press was a common carrier. As this would destroy the character of the organization and throw it open to all newspapers, it was shifted to New York, whence it has functioned ever since.

The prime movers in the new Associated Press were Victor Lawson and Melville E. Stone, then publishers of the *Chicago Daily News*, and Frank B. Noyes, then, and still, publisher of the *Washington Star*. Mr. Stone retired from the *Daily News* to direct the new organization as General Manager, which he did until 1921, then serving as counsellor until his death in 1929. Mr. Noyes became president and served for thirty-eight years.

The growth of the Associated Press since 1900 has been tremendous. It has 94 bureaus in most of the important cities of the United States and has built up a world-wide news-gathering organization. Its news in the United States is distributed over 300,000 miles of leased wires, and received on more than 3,000 automatic machines. Its daily file runs from a few hundred words to the smaller members to more than 200,000 to the large metropolitan newspapers. It employs about 7,200 persons, of whom about 2,200 are full-time staff workers; the remainder being "string correspondents," who cover the news when it breaks in their neighborhood. It maintains a news-picture service, including a wire-photo service, and sends its members an extensive feature service. In 1938 it spent about \$11,000,000 in the gathering and distribution of news.

The Associated Press is probably the most successful co-operative organization in the United States, and while this has

great advantages—to its members—it also has distinct disadvantages to journalism as a whole. The charge of monopoly has often been raised against it. Its bylaws provide that a new franchise can be granted in a territory in which there has been a member for five years only with the consent of that member. Another proviso, however, allows for a vote of the entire membership. As no publisher is anxious to fortify his competition, and as one member stands by another, the net result is that it is almost impossible to obtain a new franchise. The outside publisher must buy one of the existing franchises, if that is possible. Many newspapers have been bought and merged—and killed—just to obtain an Associated Press franchise. In large cities such franchises are valued at upwards of \$500,000 and are difficult to get at that.

The present United Press, or the United Press Associations, to give it its full official name, maintains the policy of selling its news to any newspaper that will buy it. Younger and smaller but alert and aggressive, it is an active competitor of the Associated Press in all fields. It covers the world, gathering the news where it breaks and selling it wherever it can find a market. Its services in South America, China, and Japan are the best in their fields. Its news is distributed in forty-seven countries and published in twenty languages, ranging from Icelandic to Tagalog.

The United Press was founded in 1907 by E. W. Scripps through the merger of the Scripps-McRae Press Association and the Publishers' Press, which already served his own newspapers. Mr. Scripps, who resented the idea of a news monopoly, had refused to join in the movement that started the Associated Press. He went on his own way. Belligerently independent, financially upright, one of the magnificent figures of American journalism, he wanted to be free to gather his own news and to be able to found a newspaper wherever and whenever it suited him. He breathed his ideals into the United Press. He insisted that while it was a money-making business, it must

never be obligated to any other business or to any political or governmental interest and that its news be unbiased and fair. He also wanted it free from domination by any newspaper or group of newspapers, even his own. The Scripps-Howard newspapers, its allied organization, buys its news as would any other client, and asks for and receives no favors.

The United Press has also had tremendous growth. It serves 975 newspapers in the United States and 373 in the foreign field. It has 150,000 miles of leased wires in the United States alone, over which it distributes an average of about 150,000 words daily to the larger metropolitan newspapers, the service to each newspaper depending on what it buys. It spends more than \$8,000,000 yearly on news and yet makes a profit. Still, its charges are moderate. About 300 "pony" clients pay only from \$18 to \$40 a week. About 500 leased-wire newspapers pay from \$60 to \$300 a week, while the metropolitan newspapers pay upwards of \$500 weekly. It also provides its clients with an extensive feature service. With the outbreak of the new European war, the United Press raised its prices 12½ per cent; the International News, 15 per cent.

The International News Service was started by William Randolph Hearst in 1909. Its foundation was actually laid in 1900. At that time Mr. Hearst was publishing morning newspapers in New York, Chicago, and San Francisco. A leased wire carried news between them nightly, including coverage of the national capital. In 1902 Mr. Hearst started an afternoon newspaper in Chicago and in 1904 acquired a morning newspaper in Boston. His publishing interests continued to expand until they swamped his leased-wire service. In May, 1909, he organized the American News Service to provide news coverage of the United States. In August, 1909, he extended its scope to foreign countries and changed its name to the International News Service. It provided a morning news service, seven days weekly. At the same time he started the National News Association to provide news for afternoon newspapers, six days weekly. He

set the two sister organizations out to compete with the Associated Press and the United Press, selling their services to newspapers that would purchase them. In 1911 the National News Association was abolished and its work taken over by the International News Service. In 1917 in another reorganization the Universal Service was founded, to provide coverage for morning newspapers, and the International News concentrated on the afternoon field. In 1937 the International News Service absorbed the Universal, and it continues to this day to supply news coverage for morning and afternoon newspapers.

The International News Service has also had phenomenal growth. It maintains 57 bureaus and branch offices in the United States and bureaus in all the principal capitals of the world. It employs 600 reporters and editors and has 8,000 "string" correspondents. It has 170,000 miles of leased wires in the United States and supplies news to 700 newspapers. Its daily news budget averages 150,000 words.

Obviously the news services must be factual. Every story they place on their wires appears in hundreds of newspapers, and these newspapers differ widely in their appeal for readers and in their viewpoint. Some will be Democratic, others Republican; some will be reactionary, others liberal; some will be conservative in their treatment of news, others will be sensational; while some will defy classification. They will agree only on one thing and that is that they want the basic facts of each story; so each service must be free from financial, business, political, and governmental influence of any kind. It must not be dominated by any newspaper or group of newspapers. It must be international in its coverage of the news but national in its treatment of the individual story. It must know what is happening in the world, but carry only the news that will interest American readers.

The Associated Press and the United Press are all that, while the International News still seems under the domination of its owner and delivers the kind of news his newspapers want. This

does not imply that the International News is not factual. It is. It means only that it tends more towards scandals, crime, and human interest in the news than do the others. The Associated Press, which under Mr. Stone won a reputation for dull exactitude, has of recent years been striving to enliven its news to match the more colorful United Press, while the United Press has been turning more towards conservatism in an effort to enhance its reputation for complete accuracy.

The constant effort to keep the news story factual affects the tone and quality of news service reporting. Adjectives, adverbs, and other characterizations are avoided like the plague. The reporter cannot let loose. He cannot play on the chords of the heart. He must keep to routine treatment—often routine dullness. He must be brief. He must be exact. There are, however, a few occasions when the news services do let loose and shock newspaper editors by the number and array of adjectives they can pack into one paragraph. On such occasions they seem to be striving to convince their clients that they, too, can do some fancy writing. There are still other occasions when the news services deliver beautifully written stories. One was the return of the Unknown Soldier to America. An Associated Press writer won the Pulitzer prize for reporting for that one.

The news services cannot afford to be wrong. They do make minor mistakes, for after all they are directed by human beings, and there is not a day or a night that they do not send out bulletin corrections, usually correcting a name or a figure or changing the wording of a story. Their major mistakes are few. A libelous story in one newspaper is bad and can be expensive; a libelous story in a thousand newspapers is a disaster. It has happened, however, and will happen again. The fact that libel in news-service stories is rare is a tribute to the accuracy of the reporting and the editing. When the news service does go wrong on the basic facts of a story it is always ready to make amends. It, too, feels a responsibility to its readers and wants them to have only the exact facts. It sends out a story correcting the

original story with a request that clients who used the original also use the correction. News editors almost invariably honor this request.

The viewpoint of the news service was well stated by Hugh Baillie, president of the United Press, in reply to the charge by President Roosevelt that the United Press had falsified the facts of a Washington story. In part he said:

"The information contained in the United Press story yesterday was obtained from government officials at both ends of Pennsylvania Avenue. We regarded these sources as reliable and we regarded the information as news, and still so regard it. In the future, as in the past, so far as is humanly within our power to do so, the United Press will continue to report the news honestly and objectively as it develops and without bias or favor."

The news services provide wide news coverage. There is scarcely a story anywhere that interests any large group of American readers that they will not cover. These include the activities of all the governments and peoples of the world, the doings of our own political parties, major crimes, important scientific developments, and national sports and finance. If the story deals with Americans or their interests it is covered in detail and regardless of expense.

And the costs of a story may be high, even for a story in the United States. It may be necessary to pay wire tolls on thousands of words. It may be necessary to set up local headquarters with special wires. It may be necessary to charter a special airplane or a steamboat. The Japanese attack on Shanghai, for instance, cost the United Press more than \$30,000 in the first month in cable tolls alone. It spent \$16,000 extra in covering the Lindbergh kidnapping. Neither of these sums included regular costs like salaries, office expenses, and other incidentals. A national election will cost a news service from \$50,000 to \$100,000 and this does not include the costs of reporting the national conventions.

The coverage of foreign countries offers the news services their greatest problem; and it is getting more difficult yearly. Except in the democratic nations with a free press—now few in number—the news services have to deal with rigid censorships that try to prevent the full truth from reaching America and with propaganda machines that seek to impose their national viewpoints upon American readers as they do upon their own peoples. When the news services first entered the foreign field they accepted the news of the foreign news services. They were young and innocent in those days, and they had no machinery for gathering news abroad. They soon discovered that they were carrying news written from a British, a French, a Russian, a German, or some other viewpoint, and even when factual emphasized an alien interest. For a time they tried to filter out the propaganda, but even that would not work. So they set up their own bureaus in all the leading foreign news centers, and placed correspondents at other points where news was likely to break. They then proceeded to cover London, Paris, Berlin, Tokyo, Shanghai, and Buenos Aires as they already did Washington, New York, and Chicago. This produced news that they knew was accurate and that stressed the American interest in world developments.

All the news services still work with foreign news services or foreign newspapers. They must. They naturally cannot keep men in every minor spot in the world. They take the output of the foreign service for information on routine, noncontroversial items, and use it as a tipping source. When Havas, for instance, carries a flash that King Alexander of Yugoslavia is assassinated on landing in France, the American news services spring into action. They rush men to the scene in airplanes. They use the telephone. They start sending the facts to America. They use the Havas reports to supplement their own, but they know that what they are filing is the exact truth. The result is quick, accurate information for American newspapers.

Speed is always important to the news service. Each is

anxious, overanxious in fact, to get important news first to its clients. Beats of a few minutes are hailed as great triumphs. Even seconds will help the news editor of the metropolitan newspaper to reach the street with the story ahead of his rivals. So well are news services organized that an important news break can be flashed from coast to coast and into newspaper offices in hundreds of cities and towns in a few seconds. If the story warrants it the wires are cleared, and it is rushed through in bulletins, usually a paragraph each. With the essential facts through, a new lead will follow in about a half-hour, a well-considered and well-done story with the full facts in proper array. Meanwhile news editors have got out special editions or got the story into their regular editions and are ready to make over later, or final, editions with the complete facts.

Speed is important even on routine news, for the news services must meet dead lines in hundreds of newspaper offices. With clients from the Atlantic to the Pacific, with differences in time, with morning and evening newspapers, with all sorts of local conditions, there is scarcely an hour day or night that does not see some American newspaper going to press. Most newspapers have several editions daily, some as many as seven or eight. The news service must get its news to its morning client in Portland, Maine, and to its afternoon client in Los Angeles, and each wants the full available facts as of the time of going to press. What is more, each wants the news tailored to fit the local needs.

The news editor in Newark may welcome a thousand words on a storm along the New England coast; but it may be worth less than two hundred and fifty words in Kansas City, and less than a hundred in Tacoma. Obviously the Tacoma editor does not want to get a thousand words nor the Newark editor a hundred. Each wants to receive the news on the basis of his interest in it. The news services do their best to meet these local requirements. They distribute their news over trunk wires into central offices, usually Washington, New York, Chicago, Kansas City,

San Francisco, and Atlanta. From these central offices it is sent out again to the neighboring territory, each story measured to local needs and to the kind of service that the client newspaper buys. Metropolitan newspapers will get a heavy file, the leased-wire newspapers will get less, and the "pony-service" newspapers will get a brief outline of major events. An important story for Buffalo may be omitted entirely in Oakland, and vice versa. News moves east to west and west to east, being cut as it travels. There is a tremendously wide diversity in sectional news requirements.

The news services keep abreast of the latest developments in major news stories. They will supply three, four, five, or more leads in twenty-four hours, if needed. These are determined by the importance of the event and the requirements of their clients. On a story like the Munich crisis, they will keep a constant stream of information on their wires, giving full details on every move. Even with little new to record the news services will do a story over, perhaps featuring some other angle, to give the afternoon newspapers a different story from that appearing in the morning newspapers. As a general procedure they send out leads for the newspapers publishing about noon, a new lead for the late afternoon editions, and a night lead for the morning newspapers. Each of these will incorporate all the latest information. If startling developments occur, other leads will be sent out to cover them as they happen.

This rewriting of leads sometimes results in abuses, for the rewrite man in the central office is tempted to make each a better story. In doing so he may get away from the exact facts of the reporter on the scene. He may color his story ever so slightly. He may overemphasize some minor angle at the expense of the major news. Most of the protests by the news editors of the client newspapers are based on the rewriting of leads; and it is not uncommon for the news editor to use the earlier and more exact lead instead.

The directing editors of the news services must be exception-

ally competent. They must have good news judgment. They must know how to anticipate the news—where and how it will break and how important it will be. They must know how to cover a story with the minimum of effort and the maximum of speed. They must know how to organize a big story, covering every angle of it and giving each its proper significance. They must make fast decisions—and be right the first time. They must know the world in which they work. They must understand conditions in Eire and in Japan; in Portland, Maine, and in Portland, Oregon; in Washington, D.C., and in Ottawa, Ontario; in Harlan County, Kentucky, and in Wayne County, Michigan. They must appreciate the significance of the near approach of Mars, of the latest encyclical of the Pope, of the co-operatives in Nova Scotia, of Gandhi's non-co-operation movement in India, of the flow of gold from England, and of the labor movement in France. Their work covers all the peoples of the globe and their problems, and they must bring intelligence to every news story they handle.

What is more, many client newspapers follow the direction of the news services. This is especially true of names of persons and places; here a wide variation is possible and the newspaper editor often finds it easier to accept the form adopted by the Associated Press or the United Press than to do his own thinking. In many cases this is wise, for the greater experience and the greater facilities of the news services are employed in making such decisions; and it makes for uniformity. Other news editors follow the guidance of the news services on the space value and importance of stories, determining their display and treatment by the way the news services have handled them. And usually they do not go far wrong either.

As the news services write their stories for national consumption, and for publication in hundreds of different newspapers, it is almost impossible for them completely to meet the needs of any one newspaper, especially of the metropolitan newspapers. There is such a wide variety of news requirements in the

United States that no one mind or organization could encompass them. Striving to satisfy all, the news services fail wholly to satisfy any. Nor are they expected to do so. The individual newspaper will cover with its own organization the news stories in which it is especially interested. The New York newspaper, for example, will be more interested in legislation affecting Atlantic shipping than will the St. Louis newspaper; and the St. Louis newspaper will be more interested in legislation affecting Mississippi shipping than will the New York newspaper. The result will be that each will have its special correspondent do the story in which it is concerned, getting what it wants, and will use the news service story for the other. There are few newspapers that do not have special needs which they cover firsthand.

No newspaper ever uses all the news stories laid down for it by the news services. Each chooses from the day's budget what it needs and what interests it. The rest goes onto the editor's "spike" or into his waste-paper basket. The smaller the individual newspaper's news-gathering organization the larger percentage it uses. Yet hundreds of newspapers, and good ones too, depend almost entirely on the news services for their national and international news. The larger metropolitan newspapers cover all important news with their own staffs, regardless of where the story breaks, using the telephone when they cannot get a reporter or correspondent to the scene. The news services are not so vital to them, but they are important nevertheless.

The metropolitan newspaper needs the news-service story even when it does not print it. It checks the news-service information against the facts in its own special story, names, ages, places, dates, figures, incidents, the explanation of what happened and how, important quotations; and when they differ—which is often—it checks back on its own information sources to make sure they are correct, and if wrong changes its story. In many cases it uses part of the news-service story to supplement

its own facts, to cover angles that its own staff neglected to cover, or to give another version when it cannot be certain that its own is correct.

In many instances metropolitan newspapers discard their own stories and use the press-service stories instead. The sincere news editor will never let pride in his own staff interfere with his news judgment. He wants the facts, simply and adequately. On occasions he will print the news-service story to rebuke careless work by his own men. The staff reporter or correspondent must do a better or more complete story than does the news service to win recognition and to maintain his position. The news services offer him competition on nearly every assignment. And many times they lick him.

The metropolitan newspapers also need the news services for assignment information. They allow the news service to cover the routine news, but when it develops into big news they rush their own staff reporters to the spot. They also depend largely on the news services for quick information of sudden news breaks. The airplane disaster, the train wreck, the explosion, the earthquake, do not consider news editors in their choice of locale. The news services with their more extensive coverage generally bring the first information of such events. Often the newspaper must depend on them completely, perhaps supplementing their stories with what they can obtain by telephone, until they can get their own reporters to the scene. If it is a one- or two-day story they may leave it to the news services, especially if the location is remote. When the news is predictable the newspaper editor is ready for it; but unless he is especially interested he may leave it to the news service.

The sudden breaking of a major story is the real test of the news service, as it is also of the news editors of the client newspapers. Then speed is vital; but accuracy is even more vital. There is a tendency—only human—to exaggerate the importance of sudden disasters, although great disasters like the Hali-

fax explosion and the New England hurricane are beyond human exaggeration and their toll cannot be appraised for a week or more. All news editors are cautious when the first bulletins appear. They know that the witnesses of the disaster are frequently stunned by it and have only a confused idea of what happened. Even experienced reporters can be horrified and confused. Yet the news editors must make a quick appraisal of the significance of the event and display it accordingly. The news-service editors have only to cover the story, the newspaper editors must get the story and also get a quick edition to the street.

Let us drop into the news room of a metropolitan newspaper at the exact moment that a great story is breaking. A bell rings on the automatic-telegraph receiving machine. It is the signal for a "flash." The machine spells out:

DICTATOR GOOFUS ASSASSINATED

A copy of the flash is rushed to the managing editor, and another to the foreign editor. Then things start.

A telephone call stops the presses. Another warns the circulation manager. An "urgent" message is sent to the correspondent in the dictator's capital. Others are sent to correspondents in other capitals that may be directly interested in the cataclysmic events that may follow. Still another message is sent over the leased wire to Washington, where the White House will be consulted, and reactions obtained from the State Department and the embassy directly concerned. The foreign editor consults the morgue. The chances are that a complete obituary, columns long, is standing in type ready for such an occasion. If so, several reporters are set to work to bring it up to date. If not, several writers are soon busy preparing one, each dealing with some phase or period of the dictator's life, which will be assembled under a lead by another giving an appraisal of his

life and work. The picture editor is also on the job. He will produce what "metals" (previously used pictures) he has available and rush the latest significant pictures to the photoengraving department for use in later editions. Meanwhile the managing editor and his assistants are making a new page-one layout to give the story proper display and finding space to place it. A quick edition must be rushed to the street and into the mails, with later and more complete editions to follow as they can be produced.

Some seconds after the flash, or minutes at the most, the story starts to arrive in "bulletins" and "add bulletins." The foreign editor and his assistants rush it to the composing room, which has been cleared for action. The managing editor is writing an eight-column headline. Other editors are busy with other phases of the story. Inside of twenty minutes the edition has gone to press, with all the details, pictures, and obituary material available at that time. The whole newspaper machine has concentrated its energy into a fast edition. That done, it turns its attention to the next edition, which will follow in about an hour.

Special cables are now coming in from the scene, from foreign capitals, and a story from Washington. The obituary is finished. Other collateral stories are being done. A wired or radioed picture is on the way, showing the scene of the assassination. The foreign editor and the picture editor are getting all their material into proper form. The managing editor is making space, either slaughtering earlier news stories or adding pages to the edition to carry the new story, which may fill two or three or even four or five pages. The circulation manager is calling his city dealers by telephone and telegraphing his out-of-town dealers, and adding thousands of copies to the press order. The pressroom foreman has prepared more presses to handle the edition. It is a big job, and it is handled with speed and efficiency in all departments. There is no time and no place for Hollywood hysteria. Unless someone tells us

about it, we, the casual visitors, may be unaware of anything unusual.

All this has been done on the assumption that that flash and the bulletin story are correct. Apart from the nervous and physical energy involved, the story has cost hundreds of dollars, upset the office procedure, and consumed valuable time. Suppose the story was not correct, and that twenty minutes later a bulletin correction comes over the wire, saying it was a case of mistaken identity or that only the dictator's chauffeur was killed. What then? Well, that would be just too bad! Some newspapers would be already on the street; others on the presses would be ready to begin. Flashes must be correct. All news editors assume that they are. There have been instances when they were not. Those must have been exasperating experiences for the editors in charge of newspapers. This writer never had such an experience. The Associated Press did go wrong twice in recent years, but being off duty, he missed both occasions. One was the verdict in the Hauptmann murder trial, which affected the morning newspapers; the other was on the gold ruling of the United States Supreme Court, which affected afternoon newspapers—both major stories of international interest. In each instance the reporter on the scene went wrong in his efforts to beat his competitors with the story. On the Hauptmann trial it was a case of mistaken signals; on the gold ruling the reporter based his story on the trend of the early part of the finding.

The greatest mistake of all, however, must be charged to the United Press. And to Roy Howard himself. It was the premature announcement of the Armistice on November 7, 1918, four days before that historic event. Admiral Henry Wilson at Brest had handed Mr. Howard an official telegram from the Paris embassy reading: "Armistice signed at 11:00 A.M." Mr. Howard naturally rushed it to the United Press in New York. Some minutes later newspapers over the United States were on the street with the momentous news. The crowds

went wild. Thousands of people swarmed into the streets of New York, cheering, parading, dancing, and weeping for joy. Similar scenes were enacted in Washington and a hundred other American cities. Several hours later came the official denial, but the delirious crowds kept up their celebration. Long-pent feelings were released. The people knew that the war had been won. That the announcement was premature did not matter much to them; but it did to the United Press.

Two hours after his first dispatch Mr. Howard flashed a correction. The censor routed it to the Navy Department in Washington instead of to the United Press. Secretary Daniels was absent, and it remained on his desk until the next morning. Admiral Wilson sent a message to Secretary of State Lansing assuming responsibility, but this was held up by the Secretary until President Wilson intervened the next afternoon. Later the full truth came out. A man, who said he represented the French Foreign Office, had telephoned the false news to the American embassy. He was probably a German spy. It was one of the most colossal hoaxes in history, and the United Press was its major victim. It was a hard blow to the prestige of the United Press; but that organization has outlived it by sincere and accurate reporting of subsequent events.

There is no way of determining the relative merits of the three great news services. Each has outstanding virtues, and all three do outstanding work. This writer made a comparative study of the daily files of the Associated Press, the United Press, and *The New York Times* for the third week in September, 1937. He checked in detail on the foreign, the Washington, the domestic dispatches of all three, omitted the stories of local New York origin, and made a casual survey of their financial and sports coverage. It should be stated here that a week's study is far from conclusive, as would be a month's study, for that matter. It did, however, reveal certain tendencies and methods of approach.

Here are the average number of dispatches daily in each of the three major classifications:

	A. P.	U. P.	<i>Times</i>
Washington news	52	26	22
Domestic news	207	93	72
Foreign news	51	76	49

In these three classifications the Associated Press averaged 310 stories daily, the United Press 195, and *The New York Times* 143.

It will be observed that the Associated Press far exceeded the others in the number of domestic dispatches, while the United Press led in the number of foreign dispatches. Foreign news happened to be the big news of the week, with acute situations in Europe and in the Far East. Washington was quiescent, although the Associated Press found occasion to average 52 stories daily from that source. The major domestic story of the week was the Justice Black-Ku Klux Klan story, which was controlled and copyrighted by the North American Newspaper Alliance and was available to *The New York Times* and not available to the news services. Both the United Press and *The New York Times* concentrated their efforts in the fields in which the news was breaking and made few waste efforts. The Associated Press seemed to scatter its efforts too much and to carry too many trivial dispatches—probably an attempt at “blanket” coverage.

While there was necessarily much duplication, all three covering all the major stories, each carried many features that the others did not have and so had many minor beats. The one important news “beat” of the week apart from the Black story—which it also had—was scored by *The New York Times*. On speed in getting the story into the newspaper office the Associated Press did better than the United Press. However, *The New York Times* beat them both on the outstanding flash of the week, the death of President Masaryk of Czechoslovakia, leading the Associated Press by five minutes, which in turn led the United Press by five minutes. On accuracy the United

Press seemed to be far in the lead in the week under observation. The Associated Press found it necessary to make an average of twenty-one bulletin corrections daily on the three major news classifications, and some of these were very important, while the United Press averaged only six. The Associated Press average for sports and finance was even higher.

The Black story was the one story that provided a real test of journalistic enterprise. It broke suddenly on the wire services. It had many ramifications, including a foreign end (Justice Black being in England), and national political significance. The United Press realized the importance of the story at the start and went after it hammer and tongs. It covered every probable source of information, producing several features that even *The New York Times* did not have. Short of giving its newspapers the NANA copyrighted series of lead stories, it gave them splendid coverage. The Associated Press was slow in getting under way and did not seem to realize the significance of the story; only on the third day did its coverage begin to approximate that of the United Press.

The United Press functioned fast on all news breaks and did a quick job on covering stray angles. For instance, President Roosevelt made an important announcement at 7:25 P.M., New York Daylight-saving Time, on the shipment of arms to China and Japan. At 9:48 the same night the United Press carried a good story on the reaction in China and at 11:38 on the reaction in Japan. The Associated Press did not have either until the next day. It is possible, of course, that the United Press dispatches were mostly "think pieces" by its correspondents.

Both the Associated Press and the United Press did an outstanding job on the news of the Spanish civil war and the resulting Mediterranean crisis. On one day, for instance, the Associated Press carried sixteen different stories on the Spanish situation and the United Press twelve, each service having minor exclusive features. The United Press, however, beat the Associated Press by two hours and thirteen minutes on an attack on a British destroyer in Spanish waters, one of the best stories of

the week. The United Press seemed to be exceptionally strong in the Far East and in South America. It provides a news service to newspapers and an information service to business houses in each of these areas, and so has large permanent staffs available to turn loose on the news when necessary. For example, it has fourteen staff news writers in Shanghai alone. In the week under review it carried by-lines by eleven men from various Chinese news centers. As for South American coverage it might be mentioned that the United Press furnishes most of the news for *La Prensa*, of Buenos Aires, one of the world's great newspapers. In the week studied, its files from China and Latin America were double the volume of those of the Associated Press. What is more, its stories were unusually well written and edited. Its leads were intelligently done, with just enough background to make their significance clear to the American reader. The United Press seemed to be better attuned to metropolitan journalism, while the Associated Press seemed to make the smaller newspapers its major objective.

On news of business, commodities, and finance, the Associated Press was far ahead, the United Press scarcely attempting to cover these fields. The same was true of sports, the Associated Press carrying about double the file of the United Press.

In fairness it should be recorded that a similar study was made the following week by another news editor and that his findings were almost the reverse of these. There are so many intangibles in journalism, so many different things to consider, such a variety of conditions, that it is impossible to be exact in appraisal. The reporter or service that does an outstanding job on one situation may be a complete flop on the next.

There is one thing definite, however, and that is that American journalism has the three best news services in the world today. Day in and day out they provide the American people with an accurate picture of this fast-changing world in which we live.

XV. The Camera Reports the Story

MORE and more editors are using pictures to illustrate news stories. When the news event permits of photographic treatment, they assign the news photographer along with the reporter. Often they go together, the work of one supplementing the work of the other. Both are necessary for complete coverage of many stories. While the reporter dashes back to the city room with the facts of the story, the photographer dashes back to the art department with his impressions of the scene on his exposed plates. In fact he often beats the reporter in. While the distant news story is flowing in by telephone, telegraph, or radio, the news picture of the same news occurrence is riding the radio waves, flowing over a telephone or telegraph wire, or rushing across country on the wings of an airplane. Both make the same edition. The reader turns from one to the other. The news story tells him what happened; the news picture shows him how it looked. One confirms the other.

An old proverb charged with the ageless wisdom of the Chinese says that one good picture is as good as ten thousand words. In many cases this is true. Who will ever forget the dramatic pictures of the explosion of the *Hindenburg* at Lakehurst? No reporter that ever lived could match the vividness, the terrible beauty, the horrible drama, of those pictures. Who could realize the savage wrath of the New England hurricane, the searing devastation of the western droughts, the irresistible onrush of the Mississippi floods without having seen the pictures that gave them life and reality? The news picture holds the

dramatic situation for the reader. It brings the scene to him. It presents it in a form he cannot fail to understand. It makes him almost a spectator.

The making of news pictures requires sound news judgment, quick decision, and mastery of photographic technique. Few things are as rare as the really good news photographer. He must have a thorough understanding of the capabilities of his camera in all sorts of lights and in all kinds of conditions. He must have a feeling for the drama of the action he is about to portray. He must recognize the exact moment for the exposure that will epitomize that drama. He must know composition, placing his characters in the drama in the background that will make them significant and the action obvious. He must center his picture so that it will meet the requirements of press reproduction. He must have a sixth sense for the colorful, the unusual, the humorous, the tragic, so that his pictures will have vitality and human interest. No matter what the circumstances, he must return with pictures that will illuminate the action. Editors want usable pictures, not alibis.

Compared with the reporter the press photographer has one great disadvantage; the reporter may remain in the background and at times not reveal his presence; the cameraman must make his way to the very center of the action for his exposures. The telescopic camera has helped him on some assignments, such as baseball and football games and political meetings, but its use is possible only when the photographer can anticipate the action and place his equipment in position in advance of it. On most assignments he still must crash his way to the action, make his pictures, and withdraw as gracefully as he may. What is more, he must be there on time. The reporter may be able to gather the details of the story later; but not the cameraman.

Competition among cameramen is always keen; sometimes it is savage. The man from each newspaper must produce pictures as good as those of his competitors. He may have the soul of an artist, and often has, but he must elbow his way

through spectators, upsetting their feelings and blocking their view, until he reaches the vantage point where he can focus his camera. He orders his subjects about, regardless of their dignity or importance. He dominates the scene until he has made all the plates he wants—and sometimes he seems insatiable. His flashing bulbs often mar the proceedings. He must do what his competitor does, regardless of the consequences. The ethical standards of the lowest thus become the standards also of the highest.

There has been much criticism of the bad manners and low ethics of news photographers, even by their colleagues in journalism. Editors have learned of the protests of persons like Arturo Toscanini and Nicholas Murray Butler, who resented the flashing of blinding bulbs in their eyes. They felt shame for the incidents that preceded the departure of the Lindberghs from America. They also know that President Roosevelt, Mayor La Guardia, and others did not relish candid-camera pictures of them at informal moments. Reporters frequently resent the cameramen's interference with their work.

There has been criticism especially of the tactics of the photographers at the press interviews with important personages entering the Port of New York. With still and movie cameras they crash the conferences in the lounges of the transatlantic liners, brush the ship-news reporters aside, order dignitaries about, call on motion-picture actresses to disclose more of their charms, and generally disrupt the whole proceedings. It is impossible in the circumstances for reporters to discuss any issue with a modicum of intelligence. It is small wonder that statesmen, diplomats, financiers, and distinguished authors and scientists dread the ordeal and often attempt to avoid it. Some of them attempt to get by with a prepared statement. Some lock themselves in their suites. A few publicity-minded individuals enjoy the experience; many others it tries to the point of exasperation.

Editors and publishers have at times tried to do something

about this brashness. The American Newspaper Publishers' Association has discussed the matter. So also have conferences of editors. Codes of ethics have been drafted. Other remedies have been attempted. None of these efforts got far, for the reason that news editors—and their readers—still want good pictures. Competition remains what it was. There is less purloining of pictures than there once was; but otherwise little improvement. A few indignant persons resorted to the courts, but they too got nowhere because the courts find the law with regard to news pictures ineffectual. Other indignant persons attempted to fight off the cameramen, only to find themselves convicted of assault and battery. Among the latter was Sally Rand, the bubble dancer. A Los Angeles judge decided in her case that "There can be no privacy in that which is already public." He found her guilty, despite her denials, of charges of biting and scratching the photographer. Cameramen will probably continue to make pictures in their own way, ignoring the indignation and the protests, unless television makes them and their output obsolete.

The news photographer has his own problems, and often they are hazardous. He takes his assignments as a matter of daily routine. It may be a society wedding, a gruesome murder, a hockey match, or a labor riot. Whatever it may be, he covers it without heroics. He often risks his own life without thinking much about it. He leans over the low-flying airplane to make pictures of the Ohio River floods; he stands his ground amid bullets to photograph the fatal riots at the Republic steel works in South Chicago; he goes where the bravest soldiers go in Ethiopia, in China, in Spain, in Poland, to record their daring; he ignores the heat and the danger as the wreckage of the flaming *Hindenburg* falls at his feet. His name is seldom used with the picture, nor are his praises sung. He does his job; delivers his pictures; and goes home.

And the delivery of his pictures may also involve personal hazards. Take the experiences of Karl J. Eskelund, who photo-

graphed the entry of the Japanese into Canton for the Associated Press. He made his pictures and then he tried to get them out to the public. He figured he had to reach Hong Kong with them. He started there on foot along the tracks of the Canton-Kowloon railway. He soon got into trouble. Bandits robbed him of his clothing and his camera, but he saved his films. He swam two rivers. He was held up by the Chinese six times and by the Japanese once. He was shot at several times. A bullet knocked a flag out of his hand. He finally found the going too hard and returned to Canton. Through it all he preserved his pictures. They were reproduced in the American press—in most newspapers without comment or credit to him.

No two assignments are alike, and each may offer its own peculiar problem. One of the most interesting, most difficult, and most horrible in years, was the suicide in July, 1938, of the youth who stood hesitating for eleven hours on a ledge of the seventeenth floor of the Hotel Gotham in New York while reporters, relatives, and police strove in vain to dissuade him. For almost the round of the clock the cameras of twenty photographers were trained on him, while crowds milled about Fifth Avenue. The light was constantly changing, as the sun moved across the heavens, the shadows came, and finally night enveloped the scene. The photographers could not move; they could not eat; they could not take their eyes off him, for in a split second he might make his horrible leap. The tenseness of this human drama gripped them as it did all the other spectators, for they are not less sensitive than other men. Their minds, too, considered the various ways of rescuing him, but they could not forget their primary duty. When the youth did leap while case-hardened police and firemen shut their eyes, they made their pictures, with a concentration to purpose and a devotion to duty that are rare these days.

The news photographer must face all sorts of conditions. He must have many characters. He must be as rough as the roughest; and then he must turn out as the well-groomed gentleman.

He must cover the longshoremen's strike on the docks. He must cover all important political events. He must wear his cutaway and striped trousers for the fashionable wedding. He must don his white tie and tails for the opening of the opera. He must masquerade both himself and his camera for the Beaux Arts ball. He may mingle among the guests at the debutante's coming-out party, at the swank night club, and at the royal garden party. He must be adroit when the occasion demands it. At many affairs he arrives by invitation; at others he is not welcome. He is never quite sure what he may be required to do, and he must rise to any emergency. There was one occasion recently where he was asked to put his camera aside and act the rôle of the missing best man. He did it gracefully.

News photographers have their favorite subjects and persons. Naturally they favor individuals who favor them, provided of course that they photograph well and make interesting pictures. Like reporters, they can help to make or break a public character, for the public sees them as cameramen present them. Woe betide the person who incurs their wrath!

This recalls the experience of a beautiful and glamorous lady of the motion pictures. The news photographers admired her beauty and her charm. They made hundreds of shots of her, all flattering. The reading public never seemed to tire of seeing her pictures. The photographers liked her so well that they invited her to their annual entertainment and dance in New York. She turned them down cold. They did not like that a little bit.

Some weeks later the annual flower show was held at Grand Central Palace. The press photographers were invited to a preview to make their pictures while the blooms were fresh. On their arrival they were surprised—and pleased—to find that their lady from Hollywood had been invited by the management also. Flower-show managers and their press agents always seem to feel that they must have beautiful girls pose among the flowers for the press pictures, perhaps on the false theory that they enhance the beauty of the flowers. The cameramen again shot

dozens of pictures of this lady in all sorts of postures amid the many beautiful exhibits. She was her most charming self again. They, too, were affable. But the lady is still waiting for those pictures to appear in the nation's newspapers and magazines, for the photographers shot her with empty cameras.

The candid camera has brought a new kind of news picture. Its speed, its precision, its independence of sunlight or flash bulb, its small size, have vastly widened the range of news photography. What is more, it is possible to make exposures without the subject's being conscious of it. This enables the press to get pictures of statesmen and others at informal moments and often in embarrassing positions. At its best the candid camera permits better characterization of the subject; at its worst it verges on libel. As it is possible to make twenty or more exposures in a few minutes, it lends itself to freakish treatment, for among so many exposures one, or more, is inevitably going to catch the subject in some awkward pose or with some peculiar expression. This allows greater invasion of the privacy of the individual.

William Ewart Gladstone, the British statesman, made the famous remark that pictures never lie. That may have been true in his day, but it is true no longer. Pictures can be faked in a thousand ways. Hollywood does it every day; it hurls the dummy over the cliff; it stages the storm at sea in a tub of water. The art department of the newspaper can place the characters from one scene in another. It can give the face new lines or eliminate the lines already there. The character of a picture can be changed much as the popular actor makes up for the stage. What is more, the accompanying caption may exaggerate the truth or give it a new angle. The picture editor, however, works with the same ethical principles and on the best newspapers is as insistent on the truth as the news editor.

The picture editor must be on the watch for propaganda and misrepresentation in the pictures themselves and in the explanatory captions. He can be certain that the pictures made by his

own staff are what they are supposed to be and that the captions he writes himself present them fairly. The pictures he receives from picture services and from foreign correspondents he must accept on his faith in the sender or distributor, and it is on these that he most often goes wrong. Stung once, he is forever more careful.

Pictures, like news, are subject to foreign censorship and controlled by propaganda ministries. The invasion of Poland made this quite evident to American editors, in some cases to their sorrow. Naturally there was a great demand for pictures of scenes in Britain, France, Germany, and Poland, yet not a single picture could be exported without the approval of the censors; so that the pictures used in all the American newspapers were those that the foreign censors wanted to reach the American public. The best pictures, the pictures the American editors would like to have, were either not made or were not allowed to cross the Atlantic.

With pictures, as with the news, the Germans were much more liberal than were the British and the French, the Poles being overwhelmed so quickly that they did not figure in the matter. The British censor at the start denied all facilities for radio transmission, held up or denied transit to those to be flown by the clippers, and in general only allowed the most innocuous scenes to get through to America. For several weeks virtually no British or French pictures were available to the American newspapers, which meanwhile had plenty of German pictures. Every move that Hitler made, every advance of the Germans in Poland, every dramatic incident in the Reich was photographed and sent to New York. The result was that the American press was in the position of presenting a pictorial record of only one side. Protests to the ambassadors in Washington and to the governments in London and Paris, with the newspapers as exhibits, finally brought a change. All war pictures, however, continued to be strictly censored.

The problem of obtaining pictures was only one of the diffi-

culties for picture editors, for most newspapers were imposed upon by the propaganda ministries and led to misrepresent the situation in pictures printed. The pictures themselves were almost invariably genuine, that is in the sense that they were not deliberately faked, but the captions misrepresented what was shown. The British, for instance, released a picture of a vast explosion with a caption explaining that it showed the wrecking of a Polish village by German airplane bombers; later the Germans released the identical picture with a caption explaining that it was the explosion of an ammunition dump at Westerplatte, outside Danzig. What could the newspaper do that had used the first in good faith? It could only run a correction, which *The New York Times* did. *Life* called attention to another such case. It ran the picture of the wreckage of a train, reporting that the German censor said it showed a "Polish ammunition train hit by German aerial bombers," while the British censor said it was a "train loaded with refugees" which was "bombed while en route to the Rumanian border." Another picture that misrepresented the scene in the caption was that of the alleged scene on the S.S. *Bremen* at sea when word was received of the declaration of war by Britain and France. There was much interest in the fate of the *Bremen* in America and many newspapers gave the picture great prominence, only to discover a few days later that it was a picture made at the pier in New York before sailing. Later still the actual pictures made during the ship's dramatic flight to Murmansk, Russia, were made available and published.

The writing of captions is an art in itself and is not easy even when the true facts of the picture are known. The conscientious picture editor, while anxious to dramatize his picture, does not want his caption to go beyond the exact truth. Good caption writers are as scarce as good headline writers and almost as much in demand, for picture captions can run the whole gamut of the emotions. Here again it is not so much what is said as

how it is said that counts. The good picture caption conforms to the news headlines and serves to clarify the news story.

But the truth itself can be damaging in both picture captions and news. There was the case of John P. O'Brien, who served awhile as mayor of New York. He constantly objected to the reporting of his interviews and speeches. The reporters got stenographic records of his words and printed them exactly as uttered. It ruined his political career, and as much as anything else made possible his defeat by Mayor La Guardia.

The camera and the caption writer can tell the truth and still misrepresent the situation.

There was the picture made of President Roosevelt after one of his pet projects had been rejected by the Supreme Court. It showed him looking uneasy and beaten. Actually that picture was made while he was holding his hand on his forehead to shield his eyes from the dazzling light of the cameramen's flash bulbs. The use of such pictures brought a protest from the White House. The picture told what the camera lens saw, but the caption should have explained what happened more exactly.

News photographers and picture editors realize the potentialities and the abuses of their medium of expression. Their thinking and their efforts to rectify the abuses are well illustrated in the self-imposed commandments drafted by the Southwestern Association of Pictorial Journalists during the University of Oklahoma's short course in news photography in the spring of 1938. This code was accepted by cameramen from eight states. As printed in *Editor and Publisher*, it reads:

We shall:

1. Work loyally with our staffs in securing pictures that fit this code, in keeping a balance between professional ethics and publication necessities.
2. Avoid gruesome pictures, except where, in its own interest, the public should be informed with them.
3. Regard the right to privacy as sacred, not to be infringed except where the public interest demands it.

4. Avoid picture poses that will embarrass or ridicule anyone.
5. Identify our pictures adequately and explain where they have been, of necessity, faked or distorted.
6. Willingly play no favorites in securing pictures.
7. Strive to cooperate with the agencies of law enforcement.
8. Lend encouragement and aid to the amateur and student pictorial journalists.
9. Study to keep up with the rapid advances of our profession.
10. Be worthy representatives, both in appearance and conduct, of the best in journalism.

The editor who assigns the press photographers must also have quick decision and sound news judgment. He must be able to anticipate the news picture just as the city editor anticipates the news story. He must see the pictorial possibilities of the event and give explicit instructions for its coverage. He must have enough men on the scene to do an adequate job, for the most interesting picture may develop out of some sidelight or byplay. He may have to assign as many as eight or ten men, and perhaps special equipment, to the one news event, such, for instance, as one of the great political conventions or the inauguration of a president. His men may work under the direction of one man, who may make assignments on the scene as the event unfolds and they suggest themselves, but each man must go to work with an understanding of what he is expected to do and thus avoid duplication. There must be a plan of action. The assignment editor, however, cannot supply intelligence for the photographer, and once on the scene the cameraman must depend largely on his own judgment.

A sense of news values by the cameraman on the spot often results in news-picture "scoops" right under the eyes and lenses of his competitors. Many instances might be cited.

One such scoop was obtained by a bright photographer at the Sidewalk Superintendents' Club, built by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., to permit the thousands of unofficial observers to gaze in comfort at the excavations of Rockefeller Center without ob-

structing Fifth Avenue traffic. Every newspaper in New York and every picture service sent a man to make pictures of it. It was the talk of the town, one of the most pleasant human interest stories of the fall of 1938. All the cameramen shot dozens of pictures of it, but only one photographer so focused his camera as to show the pavilion over the sidewalk, with its dozens of interested occupants, and also the scene they were observing. His picture told the whole story, not just part of it.

Another instance was the dinner of the Foreign Press Association in London. This became a story of international importance when the German Ambassador ostentatiously boycotted it because Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain in his address intended to criticize the Nazi press. When the other guests arrived at the head table they pushed the German Ambassador's empty chair to one side and proceeded with their dinner. One photographer made a picture of that forlorn, ignored chair, so focusing his camera as to show the other dignitaries at the table, their backs seemingly expressing contempt for the German Ambassador's conduct. It told a vivid story. It was one of the best pictures of the year.

The assignment editor also has the responsibility of getting his photographers to the scene and of getting the pictures back into the newspaper's office in time for the edition. The best news picture in the world loses much of its value if it cannot be used while it is still news. The news picture and the news story should go together, side by side, into the same edition. This is easier than it was even a few years ago, for the airplane and the wired photo are great time and space annihilators. But difficult problems still remain, and not infrequently they tax the ingenuity of the editor.

The expected event does not often offer great difficulties, for there is time to provide for it; but news has a habit of breaking suddenly in unexpected places, often remote, and of course the news story makes the news picture. It may be necessary for the photographers to carry equipment for sending their pictures

back by telephone or telegraph. Or it may be necessary to fly the pictures from the scene of the story to some large news center where they can be put on the wires. In many cases it may be necessary to use the airplane both ways, with the hazard of uncertain landings on unfamiliar, third-grade air fields. It may be necessary to employ speed boats to reach the arriving ships from Europe or Asia. It may be necessary to use motorcycles to dash through city traffic. It may be necessary to wear snowshoes to tramp through snowdrifts up the sides of the mountain to the wreckage of the airliner. It may be necessary to face any one of a thousand different kinds of trouble, from the opening night of the opera to dodging bursting shells at the battle front. The editor in making the assignment must appraise the difficulties and take advantage of the best that modern communications offer both to make his pictures and to get them back to his office. News pictures cost money, lots of it.

Besides the pictures made by its own staff photographers most newspapers purchase pictures from one or more of the great picture services. There are four in the United States: the International, sponsored by the Hearst newspapers; the Acme, by the New York *Herald Tribune* and the Scripps-Howard newspapers; the Wide World, by *The New York Times*; and the Associated Press, by the Associated Press news service. All of these services gather pictures from the four quarters of the globe. They maintain bureaus with their own staffs in all the great news centers; they have correspondents in the lesser centers; and they often work in co-operation with foreign picture services. All of them sell their pictures to hundreds of newspapers in the United States and Canada, and in some cases to foreign newspapers. Competition among them is sharp, sometimes ruthless. They are all enterprising. The race to get important pictures to the American press is often thrilling, for the newspapers that first get the pictures of some such event as the coronation of the King of England or the burial of the Emperor of Japan or the assassination of the King of Yugoslavia have a

major beat. Each picture service has rights to some method of sending pictures by telephone, by telegraph, or by radio.

Then most newspapers use maps, line drawings, and cartoons to illustrate a story or to give it point. These are in a different category. Most of them are made in the office by staff cartographers or artists. Maps are used to mark the progress of a military campaign, to show the route of a new highway, to mark the scene of some story. Line drawings have many uses, from illustrating the swings of the stock market to showing how the murderer entered by the window and strangled the chorus girl in the bathroom. Cartoons are frankly editorial, when not comic. They are frequently suggested by the editorial writer and conform to the policy of the editorial page. They come in all shapes and forms and are almost impossible to classify. By caricature of persons and policies they can often drive home the truth more effectively than can the ablest editorial. Others are used to brighten the sports pages. Still others are printed merely to amuse the reader.

When the pictures arrive in the newspaper office, whatever their source, the picture editor must decide what to do with them. He may consult the news editors or the managing editor, but he must have first-class news judgment in his own right, for how he displays them determines their ultimate value. He must keep abreast of the flow of the news, usually working from proofs. He must understand the significance of it and of the importance of the characters and the scenes that are figuring in it. He must know how to make the most of his pictures. He must know their reproduction value—that is, how they will look after they have been etched in metal by the photoengraving department and the final newspaper has been printed from plates produced from matrixes made from that metal. He must decide whether a story warrants a one-, a two-, a three-, or a four-column picture, a layout of pictures, or even a full page of them. Here values, as with the news itself, are relative. He must keep informed on what space he has available, which

pages contain that space, and the relation of those pages to the other pages of the newspaper. Naturally he could not place his best foreign picture in the sports or financial pages. He must make and place his pictures in conformity with the physical style and dress of his newspaper. Each picture must be in the right place.

The average reader has but slight conception of the volume of space that is given by newspapers, even by conservative newspapers, to pictures. Following are the figures in columns (*The New York Times's* columns) of the pictures, maps, weather charts, fashion sketches, financial graphs, rotogravure section, in fact everything except comics, appearing in *The New York Times* and the *New York Daily News* in one typical week in 1939:

	<i>The Times</i>	<i>The Daily News</i>
Monday	19.50	16.45
Tuesday	14.65	25.00
Wednesday	12.80	24.90
Thursday	14.75	29.10
Friday	16.00	27.25
Saturday	16.40	14.50
Sunday	158.00	84.00
Total	252.10	221.20

This tabulation shows that the conservative *Times* gave less space to pictures through the week than did the tabloid *Daily News* but almost twice as much on Sunday, giving it a lead of more than thirty columns for the whole week. When the news breaks big, like the Munich crisis or the outbreak of a major war, the conservative newspapers greatly increase their space allotment for pictures while the tabloids increase their space only slightly.

Almost every newspaper has its own way of displaying pictures as it has of displaying news. One likes to place a picture daily on page one; another only in the case of a major news story. One will use pictures only at the top of the page; another

will place them anywhere on the page, top, bottom, or middle. One will insist that pictures be surrounded by news type; another will place them anywhere they fit, even beside advertisements. One favors pages of pictures; another wants them scattered throughout the newspaper. One likes a picture with every news story or at least one on every page; another permits pictures only as the news justifies them. One tries to place all its pictures on second-impression pages; another will place pictures on any impression, even if they do not reproduce so well.

First- and second-impression pages should be explained here.

The first-impression pages come in contact with the press cylinders first and so get the wet ink first; then in the printing of the second impression, the reverse side of the newsprint, there is a tendency to smudge the ink on the first-impression pages. The result is that the second-impression pages are generally cleaner and the printing on them better. This makes also for better photographic reproduction, especially in delicate and intricate work; on line drawings it does not matter much. These pages are easily identified and are known to all competent editors. The right-hand pages up to the center spread are second impression, the left-hand first impression. The two center-spread pages are first impression. From the center spread on they reverse, the left-hand pages being second impression and the right first impression. Take for instance a twenty-page newspaper; pages 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, 14, 16, 18, and 20 are second impression; the others, pages 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, and 19 are first impression.

Editors naturally try to place their best displays on the second-impression pages, but so also does the advertising department. In fact some advertisers specify second-impression pages in purchasing their space. As a result there is often a race for second-impression pages, with the news editors and the picture editor sometimes losing out.

The picture editor must also understand how best to display his pictures to give them drama and human interest. He must

know how to "crop" (cut) his pictures to eliminate extraneous scenes and persons and to give point to the persons and scenes that make the news action.

What is more, the picture editor must maintain flexibility, for there will undoubtedly be major shifts from one edition to another with major changes in space. For this reason he generally avoids freakish displays and confines himself to one-, two-, three- or four-column pictures arranged as symmetrically as they permit, so that one or more can be added or one or more dropped without make-up difficulties. Pictures made in uneven units, like one and a half columns or two and a half columns, nearly always present make-up problems. One cannot easily be added nor one dropped. In an emergency the whole layout must be thrown out.

The formalized layout with its pictures cut into oblongs, quadrangles, and whatnot and surrounded with curlicues, doodads, and all manner of florid scrawling lines is definitely on the way out. It smacks too much of the rococo and too little of our modern streamlining. It takes too much time to make and wastes too much space. It is completely lacking in flexibility, for the whole layout must be made in one metal plate, and once made it is almost impossible to change without spoiling it. Any errors that creep in are hard to deal with. Then the reader gets the idea that it is made from stock pictures from the files, which is often the truth, while editors want the impression of spontaneity and speed.

The sudden and tremendous success of the picture magazines have revolutionized news-picture display.

The *Sketch* and the *Mirror* of London, and the *Daily News* of New York and other American tabloids had already convinced editors of the reader-pulling power of good pictures. This was especially true of newspapers that made their appeal to the lower classes, for as Boss Tweed ruefully remarked, "The lower classes understand the pictures." But while pictures were used more liberally there was little change in their presentation

in the news pages and the picture sections on Sundays. Editors gathered what they thought were the best pictures and printed them as such, scattered here and there throughout their pages. Even a picture magazine like the *Midweek Pictorial* with the prestige and connections of *The New York Times* could not get very far with the old methods. It could sell only 25,000 copies, and it lost money for years. It was ultimately sold and when left to stand on its own feet soon died a natural death. It had no rivals.

Then came *Life*, produced by Henry R. Luce, publisher of *Time* and *Fortune*, and *Look*, produced by the Des Moines *Register and Tribune*, and with them a new technique. These picture magazines took American readers by storm. Their publishers could not meet the unexpected demand for months. News editors and picture editors were among their most faithful readers. The key to their success was obvious: a more intelligent and more dramatic presentation of their pictures. They made the pictures tell the story, not merely illustrate it. With a minimum of explanatory words, they ran their pictures in series, one leading logically to the other until the whole story was told. They dealt with the human side of life. They offered unusual pictures of the commonplace. Their layouts emphasized the pathos, the humor, the dramatic coloring of the news event. *Life* offers the news in pictures; *Look* offers features in pictures. Each does its job well, using similar methods. They soon had many imitators in their own field, some of them rivaling their success, thus proving the effectiveness of the new methods. Newspaper editors also paid them the compliment of imitation.

When the picture editor decides on the pictures he will use and their display he sends them to the art department. Here they are cropped to meet the demands of newspaper presentation and touched up to permit satisfactory reproduction. This process may take from a few minutes to an hour or more depending on the work that must be done on them. Most editors want as little touching up as is possible, preferring to use pic-

tures in a form as close to the original as is practicable; but even on the best pictures some is often desirable. It may be necessary to lighten or to wipe out the background to make the characters stand out. It may be necessary to darken the shadows, or to brighten the lighting or the gray areas, or to emphasize the eyes or the lines of a face. The sole purpose is to bring out the news interest of the picture in good reproduction. On occasions it results in distortions.

One such distortion resulted from an artist's work on a picture of the Loch Ness monster. For weeks the New York newspapers had been printing stories of a monster that was seen threshing about in the Scottish lake and disturbing the peace of the countryside. Finally the partly decayed body of some peculiar animal was found on the shores of the lake. The local scientists could not explain what it was. A picture of it was brought across the Atlantic by radiophoto. If the original picture was vague and confusing the radiophoto effort was more so. It was sent to the art department of one enterprising newspaper. There it was touched up. It appeared in that newspaper with two heads. A monster indeed!

The art department makes paper cutouts, known as "blocks," of the pictures, and sends them to the picture editor. These blocks are the exact dimensions of the metal reproductions of the pictures or layouts. The editor takes them to the composing room and places them in the page forms. Then the make-up editors can go ahead with the placing of the type, and the dressing of the page. When the finished metal for the pictures arrives in the composing room, each can be placed in position. The page forms can then be locked up and sent to press, provided of course that they are otherwise ready.

Its work done, the art department sends the original pictures to the photoengraving department. Here by a process of photography and chemical etching the pictures are reproduced in metal for printing. Proofs are drawn from them for a checkup, and they are ready for the composing room. It may take any-

where from forty-five minutes to two hours from the time that the picture leaves the editor until it is sent to the composing room, depending on the delicacy of the picture and the amount of work that must be done on it. The average is about one hour. In many cases the picture will be rushed through to catch an edition, then taken back and done over again more leisurely and more effectively for later editions.

Modern newspaper photography really dates from George Eastman's box camera with its dry plates in 1888, although photoengraving was not completely mastered until 1897. True, woodcuts or bronze etchings had been used as early as 1607. Photographers covered the Civil War, moving about with their own tents in which they prepared their wet plates; but the cost of this work was high, almost prohibitive, and so slow that pictures carried little news appeal. The Spanish-American War was the first great news event to be covered quickly and adequately by the camera. All the leading New York newspapers of the time had their staff photographers in Cuba, but the camera was still such a novelty that the Cubans arrested Hugh O'Neil of the Hearst newspapers as a spy. They were suspicious of the big box he insisted at pointing at all interesting scenes. Since then the development of the camera, of the news picture, of photoengraving, and of picture transmission has been astounding.

Most astonishing of all is the wired or sound picture, a development of the past decade. There are now four or five different methods, with others in the laboratory. Each of the picture services has the rights to one, having caught up with the Associated Press, which had the first. The basic idea originated in the physical-chemistry laboratories of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1921.

There is no space available here for a detailed explanation of each process. The Wide World Wired Photo is probably as good an example as any; it uses the telephone wires. Others use the telegraph wires or the radio beams. The Wide World employs two instruments, as do the others, a transmitter and a re-

corder, or receiver. The transmitter is attached to any ordinary telephone. It converts the picture into light beams and these in turn into electrical impulses that travel over the wire much as would an ordinary conversation. The receiver converts these electrical impulses back into light waves, and they in turn are caught on a photographic film. The film is developed and the picture which was made in San Francisco or New Orleans is now in New York. It is simple in principle and does a competent job. It is difficult at times to tell the copy from the original picture. The transmitter is portable and can be carried anywhere by hand like a valise or suitcase, with the result that transmission is possible wherever a telephone is available, and that is almost everywhere. The transmission of a picture takes about seven minutes, and the toll is the same as the equivalent long-distance telephone call.

The Western Union has produced a picture-transmission system that uses the telegraph wires, cuts this time in about half, and delivers a positive instead of a negative, a further saving of time. At this writing it is the latest effective equipment.

The radiophoto at this writing is still being used across the Atlantic, although successful tests have been made with other systems, notably the Wide World and the Western Union. The radiophoto has not been so satisfactory as the wired photo. The impression is made in light and dark dots, and static frequently blurs the picture when it does not make transmission impossible. It is also much slower. Its one great virtue is that it saves time as compared with transmission by Atlantic airplanes. Newspaper readers will remember the radiopictures of scenes at the outbreak of the new European war; some of them were quite effective in giving Americans an idea of those stirring events. The radiophoto has been greatly improved since its first use.

The inauguration of regular Atlantic airplane service speeded up the delivery of European pictures in America, as the Pacific service had done for pictures made in the Orient. The world is

getting smaller day by day for the picture editor as it is for the news editor.

What the future has in store for news pictures, and for that matter what next year has to bring, is in the realm of pure conjecture. The progress of the past half-century astounds the editors who have lived through it, producing newspapers daily. One thing is certain: the American press will do everything possible to bring still better news pictures to its readers.

XVI. Features

ALL AMERICAN newspapers, with the notable exception of *The New York Times*, devote a large amount of reading space to comic strips, crossword puzzles, bridge problems, beauty hints, reducing diets, or other features for the entertainment or improvement of their readers. There is scarcely a hobby, a popular game, an amusement, or a human need or sentiment that is not dealt with in some manner or at some time or other. The range is as wide as life itself. There is not a member of the family that is not reached. There is a feature to appeal to every mentality.

Features serve a twofold purpose: they make the newspaper interesting to the reader, and they get the newspaper into the home and thus make it valuable to the advertiser.

The editor planning or purchasing features makes certain that he caters to the women and children. They are his first, frequently his sole, consideration. He usually works in co-operation with the circulation manager. He knows that women spend the major portion of the family income and influence the spending of the remainder. He also knows that advertising agencies draft their advertising campaigns accordingly. He realizes that his newspaper must get into the home if it is to get its share of advertising revenue. His business office is always ready to prove this. He strives to make the family order the delivery of the morning newspaper and to make Father bring home the evening newspaper so that Junior may not miss the next installment of the lurid adventure comic strip, so that his elder sister may read the succeeding chapters of the flaming serial novel, and so that

Mother may have the woman's page with its recipes for personal charm and pumpkin pie and its gossip and comment on a hundred subjects dear to the feminine heart. New wants are created in the household, and the advertisements are near by to stimulate them and to bring them to fruition.

Practically none of these features can by any stretch of the imagination be classified as news. On the contrary they often crowd out interesting and important news stories. In many cases features are employed to make up for the intellectual paucity of the newspaper's staff. In this time of turmoil and transition no managing editor should have difficulty in producing an abundance of good reading matter. With the world being made over right under his feet, he should not have to look far for material of direct significance in the lives and hopes of his group of readers. Serious and intelligent editors have difficulty in printing all the vital news they produce in the space available, so great is the rush of American and world events. Not infrequently it is their greatest problem. Yet the newspapers of the United States are giving more and more space to all manner of features—more than ever before.

In many instances these features serve a useful purpose and make a valuable contribution to the thought of the community. Some of them are done by outstanding authorities in their fields. There is little doubt, for instance, that the innumerable articles on calories, vitamins, diet, and styles have revolutionized American eating habits in the past generation or two and have helped to streamline the American woman. Other features on furnishings, decorations, color schemes, gardening, and home-building have made over the appearance of our homes and have made them better places for our kind of living. The work of the syndicated economists has given us a better conception of banking and investment and insurance, all of which help to make life more secure and more pleasant, while the work of the political columnists has given us a more intimate picture of our political rights and of the functioning of our governments. All these fea-

tures—and many more—come under the American urge for uplift. They might better be left for weekly and monthly magazines and periodicals with more time for deliberation and more careful editing, but newspaper readers have come to look for them in the daily newspaper, and so they get them.

Other features are printed because newspaper readers insist on having them. No editor willfully disappoints his readers. This is particularly true of comic strips. Many strips have large followings. No group of readers is more partisan and more unreasonable. They want to laugh or weep over the tribulations of Andy Gump or Little Orphan Annie, and that's that. When the editor tries to drop a strip or switch to another he quickly hears from them. And when he receives thousands of irate protests he suddenly changes his mind. He is holding the bear by the tail and cannot let go. The comic strips of today take the place of the penny dreadfuls of another day and are read with the same avidity. The editor soothes his troubled conscience with the knowledge that they bring him circulation and give his readers the kind of entertainment they have learned to want. Their influence on the rising generation is another matter—and a serious one.

Virtually all newspaper features are developed and distributed by large syndicates, most of them in New York, but with others in Chicago, Washington, Hollywood, Los Angeles, Cleveland, Des Moines, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and elsewhere. There are several hundred of them dealing in several thousand varieties of space fillers. *Editor and Publisher* lists them, and also their offerings, in a special supplement each year. They make a formidable showing.

Among the largest and most active are King Features Syndicate, which distributes the by-products of the Hearst organization; the United Feature Syndicate, which stems from the United Press and the Scripps-Howard press; the Chicago Tribune-New York News Syndicate; the Associated Press Feature Service, which supplies material to the Associated Press

newspapers; the North American Newspaper Alliance; the Bell Syndicate; and Science Service. King Features's advertisements in *Editor and Publisher* announce that it distributes "more than 500 top features of every kind—with almost 2,000 client newspapers in eighty countries, reaching 96,000,000 readers—with wire, news and photographic affiliations in all parts of the world," which gives some idea of the scope of the modern feature syndicate.

The feature syndicate, itself, is comparatively young, as is also the product it offers. The first in America was organized by Samuel S. McClure on November 16, 1884, although before that the New York *Sun* had shared stories with other newspapers on a cost basis and the Boston *Globe* had sold a serial story. The McClure Syndicate, which is still active in its field, started modestly in a small apartment at 114 East 53rd Street, New York, which was also the home of the twenty-seven year old McClure and his young wife. It began with the writings of the popular authors of the time, and among others distributed the output of Mark Twain, Rudyard Kipling, and Conan Doyle. In 1893 *McClure's Magazine* was founded and Samuel devoted most of his energies to the magazine and left the management of the syndicate largely to his brother Robert.

It was not, however, until the birth of the Hearst Syndicate in 1895 that the modern syndicate came into existence with its aggressive distribution of a wide variety of newspaper material. It had its origin in the request of one of the editors of the Pittsburgh *Press* for some of the material appearing in the Hearst newspapers. It was a huge success from the start and soon had many imitators. Among the early offerings of the Hearst Syndicate were articles by Dorothy Dix, Beatrice Fairfax, and Ambrose Bierce, the "Mr. Dooley" of Finley Peter Dunne, the poems of Ella Wheeler Wilcox, and the comics, the Hallroom Boys, the Katzenjammer Kids, and Happy Hooligan.

This was the time of the colossal five-cent beer and the twelve-hour working day. There was not much time for recrea-

tion and relaxation, and little of it was spent sober. With the shortening of the working week and with new leisure came a rapid expansion in newspaper features along with a tremendous growth in newspaper circulation. The people had time for reading and other amusements. The newspaper feature kept pace with the demand for amusement and information. Today it ranks with the radio, the movie, and the automobile—all more recent developments—as a basic American amusement. Take it or leave it; there it is.

Competition is keen among the syndicates. The larger ones maintain staffs of salesmen who call on editors throughout the country. The others use the mails, the telephone, and the telegraph. The human interest and the circulation-pulling power of each feature is stressed. Advertisements singing their praises appear in the trade publications. Editors and publishers attending press conventions and gatherings are entertained by syndicate managers. Almost every managing editor in the nation is subjected to a colorful bombardment of comics, columns, and whatnot. High-pressure methods are employed to sell one feature or to get a switch from one to another.

Competition is also keen for the right to publication of a popular and proved feature. When, for instance, a comic strip with demonstrated reader interest and circulation pull becomes available, prices go soaring as one editor bids against another. Naturally the editor whose readers are accustomed to finding an attractive feature in his columns does not want to lose it; certainly not to a competitor. The syndicate itself will raise the price, hinting, perhaps, that a rival newspaper has covetous eyes on it and knowing that the editor must have it. In any case the better features never come cheap. It does happen, however, that an editor with a liberal budget will contract for features that he does not intend to use so that he may keep them from his rivals.

As most features have national, and some international, distribution, they must be produced some time in advance, often weeks in advance, to allow them to reach their newspaper clients

in time for simultaneous publication. Each installment has a definite dated release. Naturally it would not do for a newspaper in Philadelphia to print a comic strip installment one day ahead of a client newspaper in Boston and invade its territory with it. As circulations are large some readers are inevitably going to notice it. It would bring protests from both readers and editors. Usually a week's supply of a feature is delivered to a newspaper in ample time for the first release, and release dates are scrupulously observed. Sometimes the features come in printed form, sometimes they are mimeographed, and sometimes they are in the form of matrices from which the newspaper can make metal impressions to place directly in the page forms.

The time element raises vital problems for syndicate writers and editors, just as it does for the writers and editors of magazines. A feature that must be produced weeks in advance of publication obviously cannot tie up with spot news or deal with a continuing and changing situation. It would be out-of-date and ridiculous before it could be used. It is even dangerous to mention the names of living persons, for they may die or change their positions or alter their accepted viewpoint before the release date. The syndicate writer and editor must be wary at all times. This fact cramps their style and limits the scope of their copy.

There are, however, syndicate features based on current events, especially the recent output of columnists and editorial writers. These are generally distributed by telegraph and are treated much like a news story. Some are distributed by air mail and when necessary corrections are sent by telegraph or telephone. All the Washington, Hollywood, New York stock-market, Broadway, and gossip columns come under this category. They must be fresh to have reader appeal.

Features are profitable both to the syndicates and to the contributing writers and cartoonists. The accepted practice is a fifty-fifty division of the income: the syndicate finding the market

and making the distribution and the writer or cartoonist furnishing the finished product. This arrangement may vary according to the acceptability and popularity of the feature. An interesting and unusual feature makes money fast. It will soon appear in hundreds of newspapers throughout the world, and while the tariff for any one newspaper may not be very high, the aggregate income will run into many thousands of dollars yearly.

Figures on feature earnings are rarely available, but those of the writers and cartoonists have been made public by the government. Here are some for 1936 incomes made available in January, 1938: Harold Gray, cartoonist, \$93,928; Frank Willard, cartoonist, \$69,431; Walter Winchell, columnist, \$60,666; Arthur Brisbane, columnist for King Features, since deceased, \$260,000; Harold T. Webster, cartoonist, \$59,456; and Walter Lippmann, editorial columnist, \$60,096. These are taxable incomes.

With such incomes to strive for, the syndicates can and do command some of the best talent in the country. Much of the best writing in American newspapers appears in the various features. The writer of a lucid, simple style, especially if his name is known, the picturesque national figure like Mrs. Roosevelt or General Hugh Johnson, the recognized authority in some field or other, like Grantland Rice or Joe Williams or Ely Culbertson, will not have to wait long for syndicate offers. The writer with something unique to offer, like Walter Winchell, or with the gift of simplifying complex national and foreign problems, like Dorothy Thompson, will receive national circulation. There is always demand for the writer or cartoonist of exceptional gifts.

Probably no other business, not even the radio or the motion pictures, can offer such a variety of talent. Nowhere else is the "find" more eagerly sought. Readers are ready for the man or woman who can hold their attention. The clergyman who can sermonize in type, the physician who can explain disease in sim-

ple terms, the physical culturist who can "condition" men and women at long range, the general of vigorous language, the expert who has a remedy for every difficulty that a home is heir to, the bridge expert who can concoct intriguing problems, anyone who has any unique contribution to make to the knowledge or amusement of his neighbors, is welcome. Hobbies become the major source of income; unusual information is turned into dollars. While talent is drawn from many sources from the White House down, the city room of the daily newspaper still remains the most fertile recruiting field for syndicate writers, probably owing to the fact that reporters and news editors are trained in journalistic expression and have a feeling for what the reading public wants or needs.

The wider the circulation of the feature, the simpler it must be in expression. The comic strip must be broad in its humor and simple in its plot so that the children from seven to seventy may understand and enjoy it. The serialized novel must tell its story in words and ideas that are understood by the shopgirl. The technical term must be put into simple English. The obvious must be made more obvious. A few features are addressed to the intelligent, but those intended for the millions must be attuned to the mentality of the twelve-year-old child.

The daily feature is nevertheless one of the most difficult tasks ever imposed on a human being. It is one thing to be brilliant or interesting once in a while or on special occasions; it is something else to deliver brilliancy or interest every day in the week, year in and year out. It is easy to be funny or prankish when in the mood for it; it is not so easy to deliver that mood when releases call for it. The number of topics is limited even in this fast-moving world. New ideas and situations are scarce. Everything seems to have been written or drawn. Yet the feature writer or cartoonist must develop something fresh or clever or funny every day for his waiting readers, and it must be up to standard. It tortures the nerves, it upsets the digestion, it may destroy domestic bliss.

Material is a constant problem. Different writers and cartoonists have different ways of producing their daily grist. Robert L. Ripley travels the globe for novelties for his "Believe It or Not" cartoons. Others, like F. P. A., make good use of the work of contributors. Some, like Walter Winchell, are prodigious gatherers themselves. A few pay for material. Not a few help themselves to everything in sight, raiding the output of their fellow-workers. Some have staffs to do research work and to supply ideas. Comic-strip artists frequently have idea men, something like the continuity men of the radio. Editorial commentators and columnists like Walter Lippmann often limit their output to three or four columns a week and take long vacations to rejuvenate ragged nerves and to refresh tired minds.

Everything considered, the high standards maintained over the years by some of our outstanding features are remarkable. How a man like Fontaine Fox has been able to turn out such a volume of humor seven days a week for a quarter of a century, much of it with sparkle and spontaneity, staggers the imagination. Others, like George McManus, seem to have inexhaustible invention; certainly he has placed Jiggs in innumerable predicaments, and yet he is able to find a new one. The woman commentators wear well. Dorothy Dix and Emily Post are now national figures. Each seems to go on forever; still the one can dissect the love problems of the schoolgirl and the other the social *faux pas* with the same dexterity. Many of the cartoonists, like Harold T. Webster, John T. McCutcheon, and "Ding" Darling, have a human touch that verges on genius and colors and enlivens everything they do. Many comic strips, especially, go on almost indefinitely.

The editorial columnists do not fare so well. They soon exhaust their ideas and their opinions and become predictable. The reader knows in advance how they will react in any given circumstances. Some of them drag in their own personalities and more often than not those personalities are drab. The informa-

tive column is common enough, but the brilliant editorial column is rare.

While some features like the humor cartoons and the comic strips go their way, there are strange cycles in others. The new vogue for contract bridge, the change in the feminine silhouette, the new interest in economics, give birth to a whole flock of features to capitalize these trends in human events.

They come and they go. Each new successful feature is followed by a bevy of imitators. Walter Winchell and Robert L. Ripley are examples of pioneers in new fields. None of their imitators has had their genius and success. When the new feature caters to some quirk in human nature, such as our morbid curiosity about our neighbors or about the world in which we live, it lives on almost indefinitely; if not its career is soon over. Scores of new features are born each year, and some die an untimely death, but the tendency is for them to multiply. The syndicate manager keeps a sharp eye on demand. The managing editor makes a frequent inventory of his feature menu and switches or buys features to provide a balanced and attractive diet for his readers.

Of all newspaper features the comics have had the widest popularity and the most severe censure. Now nearing the half-century, they have brought delight to hundreds of millions but from their first day they have been attacked by clergymen, educators, and moralists. Their appeal to the public cannot be questioned. Many successful newspapers have made them their major reader interest. Mr. Brisbane, a great editor, considered them the second element in the making of a newspaper, news being the first. Editors have had the grip of the comics on readers brought home to them over and over again. During strikes that forced temporary suspension of publication, hundreds of readers have called up or visited newspaper offices to inquire how their favorite comic-strip characters were faring. The fan mail of comic-strip artists often rivals that of leading

movie actresses. An attempt to drop them even temporarily has brought protests by the thousand.

"The Yellow Kid," which made its appearance in the New York *World* in November, 1894, was probably the first comic strip, although the honor has also been claimed for the San Francisco *Examiner*. It was the work of Richard F. Outcault, who had been a draughtsman for the *Electrical World*. It was printed in colors, something novel in those days. The antics of the bad boy in the abbreviated nightshirt caught the fancy of the public and likewise brought a flood of rebuke. Soon William Randolph Hearst enticed Outcault to the New York *Journal*, where he created "Hogan's Alley," with a similar urchin for the leading character. The comics were on their way, fitting nicely into the sensational journalism of that time. Editors and artists soon had comics in most of the important newspapers, and there they have remained. *Editor and Publisher's* annual directory of features for 1938 lists more than seven hundred newspaper art features, nearly all of them humor and comic cartoons. In March, 1938, it recorded the fact that of sixty-two features surviving since before 1920 thirty-one were comics.

Many of the comic-strip artists, like Bud Fisher, E. C. Seger, James Swinnerton, F. Oppen, T. A. Dorgan, Carl E. Schultz, Clare Briggs, Fontaine Fox, Winsor McCay, Frank M. Howarth, and Sid Smith, won wide fame for themselves and for their characters. Often these comic characters are more widely known than important historical figures. Who does not know Mutt and Jeff, Jiggs, Barney Google, Andy Gump, Little Orphan Annie, Dick Tracy, and Joe Palooka? Were one of them to appear in the flesh, he would be recognized by millions and mobbed in the best movie-star manner. Many are like old and beloved friends.

This is not the place to analyze the grip of the comics on the American mind and their influence on contemporary civilization. Such studies will be left to the psychologists and the historians. It is obvious, however, that the comics make an appeal to some-

thing basic in most of us. Probably we are all vagabonds at heart. The comics are called sadistic, vulgar, slapstick, and stupid. They are condemned for their machine-gunnings, kidnappings, murder mysteries, and jungle love. All this and more is true, but cannot the same be said of life itself? In the comics the hero does win and virtue always triumphs. That may help a bit. The young child fed on the comics does want to carry his toy pistol and greet his little friend with a "Stick 'em up!" He does imbibe all the new slang and vulgarisms. He does get a false valuation of many things. But the same influence can be attributed to the radio and the movies, both of which raid the comics to cash in on their popularity. The three of them have a large rôle in forming the character of the rising generation. Possibly we should condemn the whole works; but meanwhile we have them and we must live with them.

A study of the comic strips appearing in the Boston newspapers was made in 1937 by Roger C. Gay, a Harvard student in education. His findings were reported in the *Harvard Educational Review*. He measured the effects of sixty-five strips on the juvenile mind. The results were not encouraging. He found it possible to approve only twenty-six. He could neither approve nor disapprove twenty-three. Of the others he mildly disapproved thirteen and condemned three.

Consider the New York *Daily News*, which has built its record-breaking circulation in large measure on comic strips and prides itself on the fact. In an advertisement it details the results of a study of its comic strips made by two students of journalism at New York University. It captions this advertisement in large black type with the slogan: "They found 1 New York Kid not in the Know!" Then it goes on to report that 200 children were interviewed on the lower East Side and 200 more on the upper West Side in the vicinity of Columbia University. It seems that they had to get 400 children that read the *Daily News's* comics daily, and to do so they had to interview only 401 children. Surely, a remarkable fact. "Apparently you just can't keep New

York kids away from *Daily News's* comics," it concludes. "And when some parents mistakenly deprive their progeny, the progeny ankles over to the Joneses and says: "Kin I please see the funnies"? From all this the *Daily News* deduces this lesson:

"Age doesn't count against the comprehensive attractions of this most attractive newspaper which draws its clientele early and holds 'em until the undertaker officiates."

There was a time when the comics were all funny and depended solely on humor for their appeal. That is true no longer. Some of the most successful nowadays are serials, depending on a daily installment in some thrilling adventure that flows on for weeks, building up suspense and dramatic action until the final denouement. Or perhaps the comic strip carries its characters into some adventure, introducing new characters and new locale or whatever may be necessary. Many editors consider the latter technique the more effective, feeling that it gets a firmer hold on the interest of the readers.

Fortune made a survey of the comic strips in 1937, based, however, on the choice of adults. It listed fourteen in their order of popularity. It included only two adventure strips among these leaders, "Dick Tracy" in third place and "Dan Dunn" in eleventh. The most surprising feature of the survey was the continued success of the older features. The first place went to "Little Orphan Annie," created in 1924, and second to "Popeye," created in 1929. "Bringing up Father" got fourth place and fifth went to "The Gumps," the former started in 1911 and the latter in 1917. *Fortune* found that only 30.4 per cent of American adults follow a comic strip daily, but that 51.4 per cent have a favorite among the comic characters. "They represent," it adds, "the most universally known characters in the United States."

Next in reader interest come the features addressed to the women and frequently printed in a separate classification known as the Woman's Page. These are proved circulation builders, and almost always interest the advertising managers of the local

department stores. They cover the whole range of feminine activity and propose to help women to do a better job in running their homes, bringing up their families, and making a more attractive personal appearance. Many of them provide for replies to the readers, thus making a direct tie-up, while some newspapers hold women's forums where their particular problems are discussed. These newspapers meet the competition of the women's magazines, often beating them with the newest styles from Paris or other matters of direct interest.

An idea of the variety of features provided for the women can be gathered from the program offered for them by one of the great syndicates, the Chicago Tribune-New York News Syndicate. It includes articles on beauty, done by Antoinette Donnelly; etiquette, done by Elinor Ames; the parent-child relationship, done by Gladys H. Bevans; fashions, done by Bettina Bedwell; cooking, done by George Rector; heart chats, done by Doris Blake; home decoration, done by "New York and Chicago editors"; health, done by Dr. Irving S. Cutter; society, done by Nancy Randolph; and fiction, "first run stories by America's best authors." Some of these writers are recognized authorities in their fields, with the gift of putting across their ideas in simple, understandable English. The first eight of these ten features provide for replies to the inquiries of readers.

Women's features at their best require specialized training and expert knowledge. Subjects like child-training, home decoration, dietetics and cooking, styles, and homemaking are not mastered in a day. They are wide fields of information and supply much interesting material. The necessity, however, of turning out a feature day after day, year in and year out, results in the appearance of much that is trite and much that is trivial in these pages. This tendency is further augmented by efforts to develop local material to meet local needs. Too often this is the work of beginners, inexperienced and incompetent, whose ambition is to become "real reporters" and win promotion to the city staff where they can cover news.

The make-up of the woman's page is frequently dull and routine, the editors concentrating their efforts on the big spot news of the day. The managing editor rarely shows much interest in the woman's page, considering it at best a concession to the advertising manager and the circulation manager, of little significance and that only to women. Too often he makes it a dumping ground for material that might interest women but cannot otherwise be classified.

With thousands of girls graduating from high schools and colleges yearly, with thousands of women studying their own problems in their own clubs and in churches, and with the increasing importance of women in civic and welfare movements, there is doubtless ample room for "uplift" right on the women's pages. Perhaps this should be the editors' next effort. Surely, these pages could stand a higher intelligence and a new enthusiasm. One might suggest that they be brought closer to the realities of life. The latest experiments and discoveries in food values, child psychology, education, and health should be written from the "women's angle," and reported as spot news direct from the annual conferences and conventions of scientists, physicians, dentists, and educators. Women are ever alert for the new and will adopt the new information on vitamins with the same alacrity as they do the newest hat.

The vogue for columnists is one of the strangest journalistic developments of recent years. Their columns come mostly as features from the syndicates. It is a humble syndicate that has not a string of them. *Editor and Publisher* lists a couple of hundred columns, offering all manner of comment for the newspapers of the nation. They can be roughly divided into two classes: the gossip columns and the editorial columns. Both of these types existed for many years, but the former got new impetus and a new style from the colorful Mr. Winchell and the latter was regenerated by the capable Mr. Lippmann. Their new popularity has been astounding, most editors using several to enliven their pages or to vary their editorial output.

Even *The New York Times* had to capitulate, using a column of news comment most days on its editorial page, Arthur Krock writing on the national political scene and Anne O'Hare McCormick writing on European events. More recently it started a human-interest column by Meyer Berger.

Winchell remains the grand exemplar of the gossip columns. He still sets the pace. For a time he had the field almost to himself, but now there are gossip writers everywhere. Hollywood is infested with them. They are behind every pillar in Washington. It is a poor town that cannot boast of its own little Winchell. Even the colleges and schools have them. All the little love affairs, the petty and sordid scandals and the foibles of the immediate community are brought out on parade. They have proven a Valhalla for the press agents. They have brought a letdown in journalistic ethics.

Few of these columnists have Winchell's talent and almost none his adroitness. In many cases the results are lamentable. The privacy of the individual and of the home is invaded. The malicious or spiteful individual has a new medium. The anonymous letter writer gets a recognition previously denied. Half-truths and quarter-truths are spread upon the public record. Innuendo is a new kind of news. The libel laws are the one restraint, and a dexterous columnist finds it easy to circumvent them.

In fairness to Winchell it should be said that he has his code of ethics. He elaborates on it from time to time. For instance on January 22, 1935, he wrote in his column:

"Among this bureau's proudest boasts, the two favorites are these: We have never revealed a source of information—and we've exerted every effort not to involve a married man or woman with another person. Our record is pretty good."

And so it goes.

The editorial columnists, or commentators as some of them call themselves, play a higher rôle in our national life. They are of two kinds: those who attempt to explain events and

those who give their opinions on events. Some of them graze in both fields. There had long been news columnists, men who wrote on events in Washington and on Broadway. While they were allowed wide latitude and most of their work was semi-editorial, yet they tied their product closely to the news. David Lawrence and Mark Sullivan, to mention two, had long written on the developments in Washington. Then in 1931 the New York *World* closed its doors, and Mr. Lippmann, its editor, was among the unemployed. He soon made a connection with the New York Herald Tribune Syndicate and started his series of syndicated editorials and comment. He brought a brilliance and a lucidity to his work that is seldom on the market. He was a success from the start. He widened his audience and his influence and incidentally increased his income. The woods were soon full of them.

The editorial columnist makes a definite contribution to the political thought of the nation. He brings new ideas into many communities. He stimulates discussion. He offers a wide outlook. He is generally completely independent and accountable to no one. Often he furnishes a conflicting viewpoint, and it is to the credit of the American press that it gives space to the columnist who criticizes the government or policies that many of his newspapers are supporting. He clarifies many situations, frequently being better informed than his clients. And he sometimes throws light into dark corners.

There are many distinguished editorial columnists, and all of them cannot be mentioned here, but they include: Westbrook Pegler, General Hugh Johnson, Boake Carter, George Sokolsky, Glenn Frank, Frank R. Kent, Harold Brayman, Raymond Clapper, Joseph Alsop and Robert Kintner, Rodney Dutcher, Preston Grover, Dorothy Thompson, Damon Runyon, Drew Pearson and Robert S. Allen, and Edwin C. Hill. Most of these had creditable careers in journalism before they were allowed freedom of discussion in their own columns. Some of them have grown in stature since they became columnists.

There is no dearth of new candidates in a field already overcrowded. Many high-school boys and most cub reporters feel certain that they have what it takes to be commentators on the affairs of the nation and elucidators of the great trends sweeping the world. They bombard the big syndicates daily, generally fortified with sample columns. They are outnumbered only by the aspiring comic-strip cartoonists.

Then there is an infinite variety of other newspaper features that almost defy classification. Most of them are the work of specialists. Many of them are centered on hobbies like bridge, chess, mah-jongg, stamp-collecting, antique furniture, tropical fish, birds, cats, dogs, old silver, American glass, knitting, crocheting, model-boat-building, aviation, radio, television, books, automobiles, motorboats, and many others. The New York *Sun's* Saturday edition is a good example of what can be done with such material. Most of its articles, however, are done by staff experts. Saturday-afternoon newspapers are usually hard put to get interesting material and advertisements for their pages. The *Sun* has solved that problem and made it profitable. Then there are the features that are intended solely as amusement or time-killers, like the crossword puzzles, the half-dozen other kinds of word games, magic made easy, questions and answers, and whatnot. There are still the educational, informational, and uplift features such as the scores of science columns, illustrated and otherwise, the religious sermons, the moralizing editorials, geographical and archaeological articles, the historical high lights, the fifty or more kinds of financial and business advice, Dale Carnegie's pieces on making friends and influencing people, a dozen other inspirational varieties, and articles on astrology, psychology, metaphysics, and what's good for you. The American appetite seems to be insatiable.

While newspaper features have had a large rôle in coloring our American scene, only in one instance has one become an international incident. That honor, if honor it be, went to "Mickey Mouse." Walt Disney's syndicated comic strip was banned

from Yugoslavia, presumably as an incitement to revolution. "Mickey" in the comic strip was doubling for the absent prince of a fictitious country. His growing popularity alarmed the prince's uncle, who decided to do something about it. He was just about to organize a military conspiracy when the censor intervened. In Yugoslavia King Peter was still a boy and during his minority his uncle Prince Paul was one of the regents ruling the country. Prince Paul obviously did not like "Mickey." So "Mickey" and his antics were expelled from the country. Revolution was averted. God save the King!

XVII. The Devil's Advocate

OUR INTELLECTUAL atmosphere is charged with propaganda. Like radio waves in the physical atmosphere it penetrates every nook and cranny of the country. Like Spanish influenza it is highly infectious. It touches everybody; and nobody is quite the same afterwards. It is part of the processes of our modern civilization. It enters everything we do; it helps to color everything we say. Much of it is legitimate; much is sinister and subversive. Its dissemination is made possible by our Bill of Rights. Its ultimate purpose is to create public sympathy for some special interest, often a selfish interest, some political or economic ideology, or some religious dogma. The average citizen is conscious only of the sinister propaganda, taking the good, or what he considers the good, for granted as being the plain facts or truth of the situation.

Propagandists naturally make the American press one of their major objectives. They realize that the newspapers provide one of the easiest and quickest methods of conveying information, colored or otherwise, to the public. What is more they know that newspapers give the semblance of credibility to what they print. Thousands of readers accept without question what they read in their favorite newspapers. As a result news editors are under constant bombardment by professional propagandists, press agents, public-relations counsels, pressure groups, and selfish interests. Even bribery is not unknown. Rebuffed, propagandists become the severest critics of the American press and its editors. They are the first to hurl the charge of business-office

ethics, doubtless judging editors by their own ethical standards.

The volume of propaganda reaching the metropolitan newspaper daily is colossal. It comes in many forms. The city editor, the financial editor, the drama editor, the managing editor, the chief editorial writer, the Washington correspondent, receive the output of busy mimeographs. The reporters encounter it on most assignments, apart from police news, and sometimes even then. The mass meeting in Madison Square Garden, the arranged interview, the lecture in Town Hall, the riot in Times Square, the banners in the picket line, the allegedly objective survey of some interesting situation, may be nothing but propaganda. Every editor dealing with the news must be conscious of it. It is one of his most formidable problems.

Nor is it always easy to distinguish between propaganda and real news. The line between them is often fine and hard to draw. When Adolf Hitler makes a speech in the Reichstag it is certainly news, although it may be 99 per cent propaganda for home consumption. When the Russian ambassador gives an interview it is both propaganda and news. The same is true of a sermon by Bishop Manning. A fireside talk by President Roosevelt is in the same category. The news editor prints them because he must keep his readers informed on what is going on in the world. He tries to give both sides of major issues. He attempts to give his readers what Nazis and Communists are thinking as well as what they are doing. His difficulty is to know when to stop doing it; to determine when propaganda ceases to be information and becomes merely special pleading.

News editors are only human. With the best intentions in the world they can still make mistakes. It is almost impossible to be correct all the time, especially when editors may have only minutes to make an edition with a story. And when the news editor does make a mistake it is spread upon his pages and is read by thousands, if not millions, of people. He must be on the alert at all times, whether his working day is eight, twelve, or sixteen hours. The hand of the propagandist is not always easy

to recognize, for usually he is an apostate newspaperman, an editor or a reporter, who knows news from the inside of a newspaper office and how to make his wares attractive. When possible he forces the news editor to come to him by staging a news event that the editor must cover. Editors safeguard their columns as best they can, but they may be pardoned if occasionally a wolf gets by masquerading in a sheep's skin.

Propaganda means different things to different minds, with the result that it is difficult to define exactly. Many persons have attempted it. Probably the best definition is that of the Institute for Propaganda Analysis, a group of educators who have attempted to unmask the propagandists in the United States. It reads:

"As generally understood, propaganda is expression of opinion or action deliberately designed to influence opinion or action of others with reference to predetermined private ends."

The American public first became conscious of propaganda in the early days of the World War. It came in a flood from both the Allied and Central European Powers, each seeking to win favor in the United States and at least moral support. Americans have since learned that much of what they accepted then with innocent credulity—the stories of atrocities, of the maiming of men, of the ravishing of women, of the crucifixion of soldiers—was not so; that these stories despite their high sponsorship were propaganda, a new weapon, like poison gas that was used on a large scale to confound and vanquish the enemy.

Americans had always been abundantly supplied with propaganda of a kind, but its growth since the World War has been stupendous. It became more subtle, more persuasive. As we grew in intellectual, economic, and military stature, the propagandist became more active. He entered all fields of thought and action. If he could be completely unmasked it would probably be found that propaganda ranks as one of our major industries. But much of it will never be dragged from cover. Congressional committees, publishers' associations, rival propagan-

dists, and others have conducted exposures, but propagandists are so carefully organized and so well placed that much of their output defies detection. Editors, however, are definitely propaganda conscious, not without good reason, and consider every person and thing suspect unless proved otherwise. What is more, their readers are now more discriminating.

The plottings and the intrigues of alien propagandists have been detailed in the press on many occasions. Both editors and readers know how they function through embassies, consulates, trade representatives, shipping lines, their own nationals, and their American sympathizers. They have seen how high-pressure publicity experts have been employed to win favor with Americans. The German Dye trust, for instance, paid Ivy Lee \$25,000 a year, and Carl Byoir and Associates, acting for German tourist interests, paid George Sylvester Viereck \$1,750 a month. The efforts of the Spanish Loyalists and Insurgents, and of their American friends, were evident to all. Franco won the military battles, the Loyalists won the propaganda battles. Some of our associates in the World War even went so far as to carry on an aggressive propaganda for debt cancellation at the very time they were borrowing money from our treasury and giving their bond to repay every last cent of it with interest. The Comintern in Moscow and the Ministry of Propaganda and Public Enlightenment in Berlin are frankly organized to carry on world propaganda, and do. They are their respective countries' most successful exporters.

Alien propaganda is almost always cynical, nearly always intended to pervert American opinion to serve a selfish and generally an un-American purpose. What is more, it is seldom particular about the methods it employs. The redoubtable Dr. Joseph Goebbels put it very neatly and truthfully when he said:

"Propaganda knows neither right nor wrong, neither truth nor falsehood, but only what it wants."

He is probably the most capable of all propagandists. He pre-

pared the way for his master, who was on record as teaching that the bigger the lie the more likely it was to be believed. Dr. Goebbels not only converted a majority of the 80,000,000 Germans to the Nazi ideology, but he also directed campaigns that made fast headway in neighboring European countries and in some Latin-American republics. For a time it looked as if the Communists and their propaganda were the greatest threat to our American institutions; but not for long, for Dr. Goebbels beat them at their own game.

The freedom on which our American press thrives, the freedom that gives life and vigor to our democracy, makes it difficult to suppress subversive alien propaganda. Measures merely to restrict it might well strike a blow at our own most cherished institutions. Mayor Hague's regime in Jersey City is an obvious illustration. We could take action against unwelcome foreigners, but so long as they can get nationalized or native-born citizens to deal out their propaganda it is going to be difficult to control. We shall probably have to contend with alien propaganda for a long time, no matter how offensive it may be. Our best protection must remain an intelligently edited and truthful press.

More prolific still are the propagandists of our own American governments. The output of our federal government, every department of it, of our forty-eight state governments, and of the hundreds of municipal and county governments is constant and enormous. All are looking for a favorable press. So also are our politicians. It is not by chance that there is a competent former newspaperman in the personal entourage of most officials. In many cases officials circumvent their own laws by giving their personal press agents positions, more or less nominal, as secretaries, deputy commissioners, or whatnot, that put them on the public pay rolls. Whatever their titles or their positions these ex-journalists are available when policies are being made, political strategy is being considered, and the press must be informed. In many instances the headlines a political action may bring are the determining factor.

Much of this propaganda material is factual. Often it is helpful to the press. It would be difficult to cover Washington, for instance, without the handouts and other departmental publicity. It would certainly be more expensive, for newspapers would have to double or treble their staffs. But even when factual, the governmental publicity, whether at Washington, Albany, or the New York City Hall, may be partisan. Rare indeed is the handout that places the administration in an unfavorable light. Official publicity gives the political party and the officials in control all the best of it; for the rest the reporter or correspondent must dig for it.

Much of this official propaganda is mere ballyhoo for the administration in office and the men who direct its policies. A do-nothing president like Calvin Coolidge is glorified until he becomes a national hero. A giddy mayor like James J. Walker becomes the living embodiment of the color and glamour of cosmopolitan New York. The homely story or the biting wisecrack is passed on to the reporter, and by him to the public, by secretaries who know what they are about. Failings are overlooked or glossed over. Ultimately they do come out, and the public is a bit shocked to find that the popular idol was very ordinary after all.

The administration in office has a great advantage over the opposition party in thus controlling the bulk of the news that goes out to the public. So long as the press accepts the official view of things everything is lovely. The trouble is that the American press rarely does so. There are always the reporter, the editor, and the newspaper that want the exact facts and nothing else and insist on giving these facts an interpretation or presentation that the government in office does not relish. It is not uncommon for American politicians to rant at the press, usually blaming newspapers en masse because they dare not be specific and name the offending individuals. It is also not uncommon for American politicians to accuse the press of lying

when it merely told the truth—a truth that did not go so well with the voters.

Then there is the propaganda of the political machines, Democratic, Republican, Farmer-Labor, Labor-Progressive, Socialist, Communist, Prohibitionist (what is left of it), and several other varieties. All are busy propaganda producers; often this is their major function. All employ experienced former newspapermen. Usually these men remain behind the scenes, writing the speeches, the pamphlets and the handouts, editing the party organs, arranging interviews, preparing statements, and helping to direct the causes they espouse, always with an eye on newspaper publicity. On occasion one stands out, like Charles Michelson, who as the employee of the Democratic National Committee exposed the ineptness of the Hoover administration and more than any other man sent it down to defeat. He developed a new and effective technique that is now much in favor with political managers.

There are scores of other political-propaganda machines, organizations which are seeking some favorable, if not selfish, action by legislative bodies. These include the National Chamber of Commerce and the various local chambers, the National Manufacturers Association, many of the industrial associations like the Utilities and the Copper and Brass, the railroads, the munition makers, the aviation companies, the farmers, the Catholics, the Protestants, the Jews, the Negroes, the Federal Council of Churches, the American Federation of Labor, the Congress of Industrial Organizations, and many other pressure groups. They all want to get their views before the public through the press and thus bring pressure on Congress and the legislatures. There was a time when some such organizations would simply buy legislatures, but that is possible no more, or only rarely. Greater finesse is necessary in these days. Propaganda is the new weapon. But they do not buy advertising space in the newspapers to carry their message—that is, scarcely ever. It is too expensive. Instead they hire capable press agents on

the assurance that they can get newspapers to carry it as news, and free. They constantly complain that the press is not giving adequate space to their viewpoint and bring all sorts of pressure to bear upon publishers and editors. The truth of the matter is that they almost invariably get more space than they merit.

All this is part of our democratic machinery. We Americans are always complaining about something and always agitating for something. Rugged individualists, we too often consider only our own selfish interests. Too often we are propagandists without suspecting it. We think that if we fight hard enough and make enough noise and fuss about it ultimately we will get it. In many cases we do. And find the propagandist and you will almost certainly find a former newspaperman near at hand. It is one of the anomalies of the profession, of our free press, that so often newspapermen are leading the fight on their old editors to get unwanted propaganda into the newspapers. The reason for this is simple: newspapers so seldom pay capable reporters and editors what they should, that many sell their souls, and their talents, to mammon.

Nor is this all; the greatest source of propaganda, the most fertile of all because the most numerous, is the ordinary run of press agent, sometimes competent, often incompetent, representing one or more clients and dealing with all phases of American life. Someone has estimated that there are ten thousand press agents in New York alone. There has never been an accurate count, because that is not possible. Certainly there are enough. There are probably twice as many press agents as there are active newspapermen. There seems to be a press agent behind every door and under every desk. Every last man of them spends his days and nights figuring out ways of getting his copy into the newspapers. There is no limit to their enterprise and ingenuity.

Every important financial institution from the House of Morgan down has its press agent, some even going so far as to maintain lobbyists at Washington. So has the stock exchange and

many of the stockbrokers. Besides the trade and industrial associations, all important corporations, such as United States Steel, Bethlehem Steel, Consolidated Edison, and Borden's Farm Products, have their press representatives. The Metropolitan Opera, every theater, every movie producer and exhibitor, every sports promoter, every large hotel, every large advertising agency, every large charity organization, in fact every organization, firm, or group that comes in contact with the public or the press, has its own press agent or buys the services of one of the press-agent firms.

It still does not stop there, for individuals too have their press agents. The leading soprano has her press representative as well as her *claque*. So have the actress and the actor on the stage and on the screen. Both Broadway and Hollywood are full of them. Even the haughty society lady whose name reads so importantly in the society columns may have her press representative. The college president, the great scientist, the church preacher, the philanthropist, the radio commentator, the social worker, the union leader, have connections with press agents, who advise them on publicity and direct their relations with the newspapers. It seems to be an American custom. As soon as a person begins to feel important, he or she gets a public-relations counsel to handle press promotion.

Many of these press agents have a high sense of public responsibility and render a good public service. These are generally employed by organizations which maintain frank relations with the public and are anxious to give the full facts to the newspapers. Mostly competent men, they gather factual information and make it available to reporters. What is more, they are prepared at all times to obtain any special information that reporters may request. They attempt to hide nothing. They rarely write anything themselves and never try to fake a story or to put anything over. They arrange interviews with their principals, encourage news honesty in them, and make them available for comment on news affecting their institutions when they

might be tempted to run for cover. Such press agents understand the necessities of news coverage and know that ultimately the full truth is going to come out. Their ethical standards are high. By full co-operation they ease the work of the reporters and are in turn trusted by them.

Many such press agents could be mentioned. One was the late Dexter Fellows, for many years the press representative of the Ringling Bros.-Barnum & Bailey Circus. Picturesque, friendly, genuine, his yearly visits were welcomed in hundreds of newspaper offices in America. He always had a flock of stories to deliver, usually 95 per cent bunk and recognized by editors and by him as nothing else, but interesting, unusual, and garbed in a gaudy array of adjectives and adverbs. After the departure of the circus, editors would wonder how they came to give him so much news space; but they would repeat the performance the following year. His death was mourned by hundreds of newspapermen.

Another is Frank Wenker of the Metropolitan Opera. He succeeded the capable and glamorous William J. Guard, no easy task in itself. He handles a hundred or more temperamental male and female singers with tact and judgment. He serves music critics and music reporters with tact and ability. He is co-operative always, giving them what they want, willingly and uncomplainingly. When necessary he even acts as interpreter in foreign languages. As a result he has large books full of clippings from New York and out-of-town newspapers.

Probably the outstanding news promotion job of recent years was done by Perley Boone for the New York World's Fair. Mr. Boone came to his position with excellent personal qualifications. For twenty-four years he had been an executive of and New York correspondent for the *Chicago Tribune*. He had a thorough knowledge of news and newspaper requirements. He was an able organizer. He gathered and directed a large staff with energy and ability. His releases were always news, and his pictures amplified his stories. He started with the sympathy and

co-operation of the New York newspapers, but even at that the volume of publicity he placed in the New York newspapers and in the newspapers of the United States, Canada, and foreign countries is simply astounding. Never before had such an affair been so completely publicized in advance of its opening. There is scarcely an intelligent individual in the world that had not heard of the New York Fair, and this was accomplished almost entirely by free news space in the press. Later faulty promotion and high prices served to undo much of his work.

It would be good to record that all press agents are in this category, but that would not be the truth. Many, far too many, have little or no sense of public responsibility and ethical standards to match. Some of these have had no newspaper training; if they have any understanding of newspaper technique they never reveal it in their copy. Most of these men could not write an objective story if they tried—which of course they don't. Almost invariably they are employed by corporations of low business morals which are more interested in concealing the facts or coloring the news than they are in the truth, or by clients seeking to exploit their vanity and self-importance.

Fortunately press agents of this caliber are quickly identified by editors. What is more, the editors know their clients. With the great demands on news space, editors naturally give short shrift to the product of such press agents. The great bulk of it goes into the waste basket or on the desk spike. Some of it may find its way into a snappy reference or a disingenuous question in a gossip column—and often that is the measure of its importance.

Ignorance of newspaper requirements defeats many such press agents. The copy without time element that might make a good feature story for the Sunday edition is sent to the city editor. The copy with the time element is sent to the Sunday editor. The drama editor, the music editor, the financial editor, the society editor, may get the wrong copy, and not being of interest to him it dies an untimely death. Then copy is grossly over-

written. What might make a short paragraph is expanded into a column or more with a puff for the client in every other sentence. The letter may be addressed to an editor long deceased or to one now employed on some other newspaper. Naturally such carelessness does not impress the receiving editor. Often the copy itself is obviously inaccurate. Editors and reporters make enough errors of their own without inviting more.

Editors also resent the efforts by press agents to control the source of the news and its release. If the story is worth using they want to check back on it. They may want to question the client. They may also want more detail, more facts on some angle of it, perhaps the very angle that makes it of interest to them. They want the story to meet their news standards. And they want it complete.

Once in a while a press agent tries to drag out a story over several days by releasing it in installments. Nothing is more maddening to editors. They don't want half-stories or third-stories, especially when the job is crudely done. They want the full details for their own information and assurance, even when they don't intend to print them. In such cases they go after the information in the coming releases and they get it.

There are of course capable press agents who produce news by their intelligence and sense of news values. They make the event that makes the news, and the newspapers cover it with their own reporters, and gladly. Edward L. Bernays is such a one. His handling of the Light Golden Jubilee was masterly. Newspapers could not ignore it, for he brought Thomas A. Edison, Henry Ford, and many other notables to Dearborn, and had the President of the United States deliver the principal address. As part of his promotion he had the post office issue a special stamp. Even more ingenious perhaps were his national contests and exhibitions of sculptures done in Ivory soap. These made good news stories. They had novelty and supplied good pictures, even if they did bring publicity to Procter and Gamble and help to stimulate soap sales. It was good showmanship. The trouble is

that men of lesser ability try their hands at similar promotions. After a thousand varieties of lime week, stepmother week, paint-the-back-door week, and other monstrosities editors got fed up with the whole tribe and all their works. They know they are being used.

Ivy Lee was the best known of the public relations counsels in the booming 1920's. He was the adviser of big business and big businessmen. He was credited with many things, the popularizing of the Rockefellers, the accessibility of businessmen to the press, and the switch in corporation policy that brought the press agents to the fore. He was the idol of every worker in his strange profession, and the reports of his fees were fabulous. Yet he was the most disliked press agent in New York.

Mr. Lee was most widely known for his work for the Rockefellers. The dramatic change in their public standing was doubtless due to their distribution of their wealth in the public interest, but it brought him fame and clients and fees. He followed the policy of giving the press only the facts he wanted it to have and only when he was good and ready. All inquiries to the Rockefeller homes and offices would be referred to him; and he would deny everything. This was irritating to the press when there was a basis of truth in reports. On more than one occasion he gave a story to all the newspapers when he found that one was insistent on using it, thus spoiling a good beat. One irate city editor informed him that he would make him a liar by using the facts with his denial of them. He never changed.

During the protracted negotiations that resulted in the deal for the site of Rockefeller Center there were all sorts of rumors about New York concerning the great project. Every newspaper in the city had heard them, and every city editor was doing his best to get the facts. Mr. Lee tried to block them at every turn. Finally one city editor decided to appeal to John D. Rockefeller, Jr., direct. He gave a reporter a letter addressed to Mr. Rockefeller, telling him that the newspaper had done him many favors and asking in return that he see its reporter for a

few minutes. A secretary accepted the letter at Mr. Rockefeller's home. After some time Mr. Rockefeller appeared. He was so unnerved by the unusual experience that he trembled and could scarcely speak. He suspected all sorts of tragedies, including the death of his father. The reporter did not get the information he sought. The experience was not repeated.

The mind of the average press agent seems to run to stunts, some unusual happening that will command the interest of the newspapers and bring the desired publicity for his client. Their own view of their stunts is well illustrated by the replies that several made to a question asked by the Inquiring Photographer of the New York *Daily News*. The question was:

"What was the biggest publicity stunt you ever arranged?"

Claude Greneker, the veteran publicity director of the Shubert theaters, replied:

"Gaby Deslys, the French actress, came for a tour of this country when eggs were unreasonably expensive. She brought her own hen in a gilded cage with jewels to scratch on instead of shells. Throughout her tour she would autograph an egg and present it in a jewelled box to the mayor of each city."

Charles Washburn replied:

"Tiny-Cline's slide for life on a wire from the Edison Hotel's roof to the Palace Theatre's roof. Tiny was arrested and so was I. She was more worried about the pinch than she had been over risking her life. Stunts are headaches always and I avoid them whenever possible."

Josef Israels, 2d, of Publicity Associates, replied:

"I suggested and participated in the exploitation and building of the mooring mast on top of the Empire State Building, making it the highest building in the world. The resulting publicity, with pictures of a dirigible moored to the mast, was printed in every city in the world."

As things stand, the press agent as such is not highly regarded by newspapers, which of necessity must be his chief medium of publicity. Press agents have on occasion done a good job of or-

ganizing public opinion for a client, but to date they have not done a good job of organizing public opinion for the press agent himself. To many minds the very mention of his work suggests something sinister. Two or three efforts have been made to uplift the press agent. Doubtless his greatest need is a code of ethics that can be imposed on all, and higher standards of craftsmanship, preferably newspaper standards, for all who are allowed to enter the field. Neither of these will be easy, for too often the employing client knows little or nothing of these things and is himself suspect.

The press agent has had and continues to have a profound effect on the reporting of news. A quarter-century ago when he was less ubiquitous and less aggressive the reporter had to do his own digging for his facts. Now it is so easy, so very easy, to speak to the press agent either on the scene or over the telephone, so easy to accept the handout at its face value, so easy to write the story from the advance release and the advance texts of the speeches, so easy to allow the press agent and his client to evaluate the event on the basis of their self-interest. This is the day of the lazy reporter. He can get by for a time, but only for a time, for the astute city editor will soon see through his methods. Editors give their best assignments to reporters who bring intelligence and industry to their work. Skepticism is still an asset in reporting.

Then there are the gratuities. It is common knowledge that editors and reporters receive tickets for theaters, passes for baseball games, and other forms of entertainment. Passes are usually dispensed by the press agent and are used by him to gain a welcome entrance or to build up good will for himself and his client. Tickets are sent to the reporters who cover an event, although some newspapers refuse them, and as for the other passes they are generally for performances that will not sell out. In many cases it is an effort to "paper" a performance and to give it an appearance of popularity that it would otherwise lack. As a whole this practice is innocent enough, for no serious news-

paperman allows such a thing to influence his judgment. For instance, read the criticisms of a lame and bawdy play in the New York newspapers. Also notice the attacks on critics and newspapers by producers and actors. The practice is nevertheless frowned on by ethical editors and reporters, and such gratuities are refused when they are given with the intention of influencing the press. The editor or reporter who accepts a bribe of any sort is no less a criminal than the grafting politician and like him prostitutes a public trust. There have been editors and reporters who betrayed this trust, but when discovered they have been driven out in disgrace.

For many years the American Newspaper Publishers Association has carried on an active campaign against press agents and their output. Its motive is twofold: first, to conserve the news space that goes to press agents; second, to force their clients to purchase advertising space for their announcements. It regularly sends bulletins to news editors informing them of publicity drives in the making and exposing press-agent copy. Editors are then better able to appraise the copy when it reaches their desks, as it will. The A.N.P.A. contends that "they will not pay for it if you give it away." It is specific on the names of individuals, corporations, and products.

The A.N.P.A. considers the press agent a commercial rival, and for the good reason that press agents place a dollar-and-cents valuation at current advertising rates on their newspaper clippings. Armed with a prospectus of earlier campaigns and fortified with figures, the press agent approaches a prospective client. He is prepared to prove that it is cheaper to employ the press agent than to advertise in the newspapers. In many cases he can make a good argument, but he can hardly blame the publishers for also accepting the argument and for feeling that all this is at the expense of their advertising revenue. There are specialists in such publicity campaigns. Others vary it by tying up publicity with advertising campaigns. Publishers and editors like neither.

The best-known expert in this sort of work is Stephen Jerome Hannagan. The pictures of his bathing beauties at Miami Beach are known in most newspaper offices and have brought an abundance of publicity to that resort. His most recent accomplishment was the popularizing of Sun Valley, Idaho, a winter resort of mountains and snow. This was a task that might well daunt a less ingenious and less capable man. Here was a totally unknown commercial undertaking, a thousand miles from nowhere and intended primarily to bring passenger fares to a railroad. Hannagan put it over, however, and even got bathing beauties into the wintry scenery by building a bathing pool amid the snows. Editors knew what he was about, but his copy and his pictures were irresistible. Among his other endeavors have been the Indianapolis Speedway and Montauk Point.

In efforts to curb press agents, publishers and editors have even resorted to embargoes on publicity. This has been tried in Los Angeles, Atlanta, Augusta, Nashville, Binghamton, and elsewhere. Hostility probably reached its peak when the Virginia Press Association burned publicity releases at Old Point Comfort, much after the manner of the book bonfires of the Third Reich. Editors report that these embargoes resulted in a large saving of news space that could be devoted to live news. They found no resentment on the part of advertisers, who on the contrary co-operated by sending no further news releases from their agency offices. They contend that the complete elimination of commercial publicity made more interesting newspapers. Be that as it may, the embargo movement did not spread; probably because the American news editor does not relish such methods and has confidence in his own ability to deal with the problem.

The press agent and the propagandist will continue so long as this remains a free country, with a constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression. Embargoes and other methods may curtail their results, but not their activities. The legitimate, the helpful, work they do will be welcomed, the rest will be increas-

ingly more difficult to get into news columns. One editor has estimated that one-third of news material appearing in newspapers has its origin with press agents and propagandists. This seems high. Few editors use any of their material without a checkup and a rewriting to conform to news standards. More and more nonpartisan, objective news is demanded, and this restricts the press agent and the propagandist. Indirection and trickery may occasionally get a story into a newspaper, but not if the editor knows it. And editors are better acquainted with press agents and propagandists and their methods than ever before.

XVIII. The Editor Looks at Life

A NEWSPAPER'S opinions and comment on events are expressed on its editorial page. Here the technique is different from that in the rest of the newspaper. In its news columns it tells what happens as accurately and as objectively as it can; in its editorials it tells what it thinks of these happenings. Its news is gathered in the interest of its readers; in its editorials their cause is argued, explained, or defended, their rights are championed. In the one its purpose is to inform its readers; in the other to win them to its viewpoint. Editorials are frankly partisan.

Editorials are written by a separate staff, and almost always after a conference on policy. This staff has no traffic with the news staff, apart from availing itself of the information that the news staff gathers. The news writer deals with the world of action; the editorial writer deliberates in the cloister. The former works with an open mind; the latter too often makes events fit a mental pattern. Great ability, a power of expression, and specialized knowledge are requisites for the editorial writer. He should be a sound journalist of wide experience.

On the larger metropolitan newspapers from five to fourteen editorial writers may contribute to one editorial page, each a specialist in some important human activity. One most certainly will be expert in American politics, one in foreign affairs, and there will probably be others to deal with finance, economic problems, national defense, and armaments. While their writings will cover a wide sweep they will doubtless conform to

one general viewpoint. Editorials in the same newspaper rarely conflict. The comment in the Republican newspaper will be consistently Republican; that in the liberal newspaper consistently liberal; that in the radical newspaper consistently radical. The result is consistent because the writers were chosen for their known viewpoint. They are seldom guilty of heresy.

The editorial staff is directed by a chief editorial writer, who may be known as the editor-in-chief, or by the editor. He presides at the editorial conferences, decides on the editorials to be written, and makes the assignments. In many instances he instructs the writer on precisely what is wanted. Generally he reflects the viewpoint of the publisher or the owners, although there have been editors who have had a completely free hand. In many cases the publisher himself sits in at the conferences and orders the editorial policy. No editorial page is better than the man who directs it, be he editor or publisher or, as happens, both. His personality and his thinking dominate the editorial page and set its pace.

Let it be understood here that the American press is a capitalistic press. How could it be otherwise? It takes capital to start a newspaper and it must continue to make a profit for its owners if it is to survive. Our American press has grown and prospered under our capitalistic democracy. Its freedom is guaranteed by our constitution, because from the beginning of the Republic it has been recognized as a vital part of our democratic processes. The very freedom of the press to criticize our government implies private ownership.

No one would dare maintain that our American newspapers have not abused their privileges; yet no one could successfully contend that on the whole they have not done a splendid job. While reflecting our capitalistic democracy and faced with the necessity of surviving in a capitalistic economy, our newspapers have exposed corrupt government and corrupt capital alike. The weaknesses and the abuses of our American system have been spread before millions of readers. Newspapers have led the

efforts to correct them. No government in our history has escaped criticism and attack by the press. Our democracy may move slowly, despairingly so at times, but not from lack of information. Our American citizens are the best informed of any group of readers in the world, and only because they have a courageous and intelligent press. At their worst our American newspapers are better than the regimented newspapers of Russia and Germany, and at their best they are the very best known to mankind to date. When better newspapers are produced they will doubtless be produced by American capitalists.

Most of the criticism of our American press in recent years came from self-styled liberals, many of whom lived and wrote under false colors. They gave a new meaning to the old and honored word "liberal." With them it meant sympathy with or acceptance of communist principles, and generally the Stalinist regime, a narrow, cruel, and purging one-man dictatorship. They attacked and belittled and subtly strove to subvert the system that gave them along with the American press the privilege of free expression. And for what? For the communist regime that would deny freedom of expression, that would feed only propaganda to its people, and like its Russian model would "purge" any editor who attempted, however mildly, to hint at the truth.

Their criticism was based largely on the refusal of American editors to accept communist propaganda as the only news to print. The few who did were hailed as great "liberals"; those who did not were condemned as base. With these "liberals" the editor, before the Hitler-Stalin rapprochement, was either communist or fascist. They did not recognize the great middle ground of genuine liberal democracy on which most intelligent Americans stood. They themselves differed from the Nazis and Fascists only in pretense; the latter openly admitted that they would regiment the press and make it an instrument of propaganda. Communist or Fascist, the regimented press prints only what it is told to print. Moscow has allowed no more of the

truth than did Berlin. The American editor wants neither one nor the other. Under either he would be the first to enter the concentration camp or to face the "purging" squad.

American newspapers have striven for twenty-odd years to tell the truth about Russia, as about the Fascist regimes. But they have sought the whole truth. It has not been easy to get. They have been interested in Russia, particularly, as a new experiment in government. American editors have viewed the Soviet regime as a colossal laboratory in which the ideals of socialism were receiving their first practical test. They have watched it with continuing interest. Their correspondents have tried to get the full facts out of Russia. Their reporters have covered the activities of communists in the United States. They have published without qualification the programs of the communists at home and abroad. They have printed speeches of their leaders. They have even given an audience to these criticizing "liberals." They have kept the American public informed.

How much capitalistic propaganda has appeared in the Russian press? Has it ever told the whole truth about conditions in the United States? Does our own *Daily Worker* treat capital fairly? Does it, for instance, give as correct a picture of American events as does the New York *World-Telegram*? These alleged liberals damn Americans editors and publishers for not doing in full measure what they themselves do not intend to do even in part if their revolution comes.

The editorial page of each American newspaper must serve its own group of American readers. The astute publisher and his editors are always aware of their readers' interests. They seldom offend their readers' sensibilities, and when they do they hear about it. Every newspaper receives letters from its readers every day, often hundreds of them. Naturally physical limitations make it impossible to print them all, but editors do make space available for the most representative. The conscientious editor finds space for reader opinion that conflicts with his own, however unflattering it may be. He may remove abusive terms,

which are not uncommon, for his newspaper must go through the mails and be read in the home, but he allows the reader to present his argument. This is true democracy.

Nothing so impresses editors and publishers as these spontaneous outbursts of their readers. Their news stories and their editorial policy may be subject to adverse criticism by experts within their offices without avail, but let a few readers write in to find fault and they almost always get action. As was said before, a newspaper cannot function without readers. If the reader should charge unfairness or inaccuracy there is a thorough investigation, and, if necessary, a correction printed in the next edition. Even when the story or editorial is factually correct the letter may be published to mollify the reader.

Most newspapers make these letters to the editor a daily feature, a sort of forum for the expression of American opinion. Often this is one of the most interesting and widely read features of the newspaper. Here the reader can make his complaint. Here he can sponsor a new idea. Here he can, and does, make the voice of America heard. Unpopular governmental action is attacked. Injustices are exposed. The editor himself is denounced. Many causes are extolled. Frequently there are many letters advocating each side of an issue. They represent a cross section of the newspaper's readers, a sampling of American thinking.

The letters that arrive daily in the office of the metropolitan newspaper come from all classes and all sections of the country and not infrequently from abroad. Many are from quacks and cranks, many more from the average citizen, and not a few from intelligent thinkers and leaders in all phases of life. They would make an absorbing study for the psychologist. As it is, one editor is employed to deal with them. He makes a selection, usually the most interesting or important, but including those that must be used in fairness, and these will appear in his newspaper. Some require an answer either in the newspaper or by mail. He takes care of these also. All that are genuine and spontaneous

he deals with, ignoring only those, usually abusive, that arrive anonymously. The reader who lacks the fortitude to sign his letter can scarcely expect the editor to consider it seriously.

Sometimes these letters bring ideas to the editor that are well worth following up. They may tip him off to a news story. They may give him a new slant on an old problem. They may bring a vital problem to his attention. They may point out sources of information that had not occurred to him. They may even alter his viewpoint. By keeping in touch with these letters he keeps in touch with the mind of his readers. It is his most direct contact with them.

This American institution, or habit, call it what you will, has been subject to much abuse in recent years. Propagandists have learned to use it. These include all the pressure groups, communists, fascists, medical faddists, churches, schools, labor unions, chambers of commerce, and a score of others. They operate in two ways: by attempted intimidation of the editor, usually threatening a boycott, and by demands that their side be presented in his editorials and news columns. No longer can the editor accept all his letters on their face value. No longer can he accept them all as spontaneous and sincere. He must now watch for the hand of the propagandist and for ulterior motives.

Fortunately the work of the propagandist is easily recognized.

When, for instance, upwards of one hundred letters arrive in one mail from the school children of Amityville, Long Island, objecting to his editorial position on school buses, and when all these letters are worded alike, offer the same argument, and make the same threat, and have the same misspelling of his name, the editor knows that these children have been directed to write letters and told what to say. He knows that these children are being used as instruments of propaganda, much as Hitler or Stalin would use them. He knows it is the work of one mind, and not a very subtle one. He evaluates the joint effort accordingly. He considers it unfair, an abuse of American

freedom. He is always ready to meet an open and honest argument, but he feels, and rightly, that this is an effort to "gang up" on him. He does not like it, and it only serves to confirm him in his editorial position.

The civil war in Spain brought a flood of letters to editors. The American friends of the rival factions kept up a constant bombardment of editors who were attempting under great difficulties to present a fair picture of the conflict to their readers. Every story, no matter how accurate and authentic, and every editorial, no matter how sincere and fair, brought a flood of protest from one side or the other, sometimes from both. Neither side was interested in the truth; each side wanted only its own version in the newspapers. There are people who cannot distinguish between opinion and facts. Correspondents were belittled, abused, and accused of all sorts of silly things. Editors were branded with intellectual dishonesty. The net result of it all was that the newspapers printed the best news and comment available and ignored the inevitable attacks.

Not all propaganda is sinister. Some of it is innocent enough. An example of the latter had its origin in the righteous wrath of St. Joseph, Missouri, some years ago when *The New York Times* inadvertently referred to that proud city as a "village." The editors caught the error soon after the appearance of the first edition, and at once replated to correct it, but the damage was done, for it was the copies with the mistake that were sent to St. Joseph. The storm they evoked was catastrophic. The Chamber of Commerce and all other civic bodies were quickly on the job. A flood of resolutions condemned *The Times* and all its works. The local press was unsparing in its criticism. Every mail brought hundreds of letters to the sad editors, letters from municipal officials, clergymen, merchants, professional men, the Rotary, the Lions, the Kiwanis, school children, and ordinary citizens. No doubt was left of the gravity of the offense. *The Times* did the gracious thing; it printed some of the more important letters—it could not possibly run them all—

and it published an editorial that apologized for its error and outlined in no uncertain terms the many virtues and accomplishments of St. Joseph.

The letters to the editor often are interesting human documents, revealing the writer's problems with a frankness that he would not employ with his best friend. Sometimes they are the last resort of the desperate. The intending suicide writes in to tell about it. The defeated father appeals for help for his starving children. The distraught wife asks for protection against the brutalities of her drunken husband. The defrauded citizen, the disillusioned taxpayer, the hopeless youth, and the betrayed, Broadway-stricken maiden want advice on their problems. The editor helps when he can. Sometimes the right kind of publicity brings a solution. At other times the letters are turned over to the proper authorities or institutions for action.

Over a period of years *The New York Times* received a series of letters from an anonymous writer in Maryland. He rarely missed a day; when he did two or more letters repaired the gap. His letters commented intelligently on the current news and especially on foreign events. They obviously came from a cultured gentleman. As they were anonymous, not one was used. But the curiosity of the editors was aroused. They wanted to know who he was and why he persisted in his hopeless efforts. Finally they investigated. They found that the writer was a retired and invalided naval officer. He was confined to his bed and occupied his time with reading the newspapers and writing letters to the editor. These letters were his sole outlet. They kept alive his interest in affairs. Some time later he died, and *The Times* gave him a good obituary, a sort of posthumous recognition.

Then there was the man who for years sent a telegram to *The New York Times* nightly—and always collect. He criticized the editing of the news in the day's paper and offered suggestions for the display of the news in the next issue. He was evidently a former newspaperman, for his knowledge of news

and his judgment were sound. As his instructions frequently ran to great length—and were costly—the editors tried to stop them. They refused to accept service from the telegraph companies and tried to make the sender pay the tolls. This was not possible, for he was forever on the move and traveled widely, and at each new place would send his telegram collect. Finally he did stop, or perhaps he switched his allegiance. The editors never discovered who he was or why he favored them with his gratuitous advice.

Not only the great editorial page, but also the great newspaper, invariably has a great publisher behind it. Honest convictions, high ethical standards, editorial courage, and a sense of public duty don't come by accident. They come from a publisher who embodies these virtues and breathes them into his organization. Great newspapers are nearly always owned within their own offices and are beholden to no outside influence. They cannot be bought or intimidated. They exercise complete independence in the coverage of the news and in their comment on it. There are many such newspapers in the United States, and they are the leaders, and incidentally the most prosperous financially. The public senses that they are rendering a great service and stands by them, even if at times it may feel that on some one point they are in error, for it knows that it is an honest error.

There are, of course, all sorts of publishers. They come good, bad, and indifferent, and almost always they stamp their character on their newspapers. There is the publisher who makes his money in chain stores, bathtubs, or shoelaces, and buys a newspaper for the publicity and the prestige it will give him, much as some other suddenly wealthy man buys a stable of race horses. There is the publisher who serves as the tool of some political clique or special interest, buys a newspaper with money not his own, and conducts it to promote the purposes, sinister or otherwise, of his owners. There is the publisher brought up in the best traditions of journalism, who approaches

his task with a high sense of public responsibility and maintains the highest standards of the profession. There is also the publisher, sometimes the son of a great publisher, who has been brought up in the best traditions of journalism, but who through lassitude or social ambition allows his newspaper to degenerate into a supine, spineless thing that does not cover the news or offer an editorial with conviction. The discerning reader can always diagnose the character of a newspaper and the character of its publisher.

Adolph S. Ochs was the newspaperman's ideal publisher. He had editorial honesty, editorial conviction, editorial independence. He insisted on the highest ethical standards in news, in editorials, in advertising. He sponsored complete and objective coverage of the news, regardless of race, color, or creed. He encouraged his editors to comment on events according to their honest convictions and without fear or favor. No employee of his ever wrote a word he did not sincerely believe. Both when young and poor and when old and wealthy he subordinated the business office and maintained strict censorship of advertising in the interest of his readers, rejecting thousands of dollars worth of advertising that did not conform to his high standards. He employed the ablest men he could find to direct his editorial page, his news columns, and his business office, and then gave each a free hand to produce the best newspaper they could. He considered public service more important than profits, and when profits did come he ploughed most of them back into his newspaper to make it better still. A sincere, simple, humble man, his sole ambition was to produce a great newspaper serving its city, its state, and its nation. *The New York Times* of today is his monument; and the force of his character still dominates every word it prints.

There are as many ways of writing editorials as there are editors and publishers. Frank I. Cobb, Henry Watterson, Horace Greeley, Charles A. Dana, William Allen White, Rollo Ogden, William Randolph Hearst, Captain Joseph Patterson, Roy

Howard, Walter Lippmann, to mention the first ten that come to mind, would each follow a technique as individual as his own personality. Even in these days of impersonal editorial pages, the editorial reflects the character of the writer. It remains more an individual than an institutional effort. For this reason the assignment of the editorial writer on the metropolitan newspaper is important. The selection of the writer of liberal mind will mean an editorial leaning more to the left than will the assignment of his more conservative colleague, given the same material and the same conviction and honesty. Most assignments of editorial writers, however, are made after thorough discussion of the prospective editorial by the editorial council and with a knowledge of previous expressions by the newspaper's editors on the same subject. The man chosen for the job will probably be the one most familiar with the subject, and certainly one who supports the council's majority view of the issues involved.

The editorial writer follows the news closely. He uses the latest information available. Often he must write on a situation that is still in process of development, while reporters and news editors are working on it. For the afternoon newspaper he writes on information in the morning newspapers and in the early-day news stories; for the morning newspaper he writes from information in the afternoon newspapers and from late-afternoon news dispatches. Sometimes the events change so fast that it becomes necessary to revise the editorial, do it over, or "kill" it entirely. In some cases he may wait until the event reaches its ultimate development. In all cases it is necessary to have an editorial writer or a news editor watch over the editorial page while the newspaper is being produced to keep its facts abreast of the news and its comment in conformity with the facts.

Despite the wide variety displayed on the average editorial page, editorials admit of three classifications, based largely on methods of approach. First, there is the expository editorial that confines itself to elucidation of an event, giving the necessary background to make clear what it is all about, and leaves the

reader free to form his own judgment. Second, there is the straddling editorial in which the editor attempts to be on both sides of the issue at once. It is often a complete failure, for while it offends no one it pleases no one and gets nowhere. Finally there is the argumentative editorial that strikes out with bold conviction, and spares no one.

The argumentative editorial naturally makes the most interesting reading. Editors without convictions and without courage are sad creatures at best. A provocative editorial once in a while lifts the editorial page above mediocrity, but the editorial page that becomes a common scold does not get far either, for it defeats its own purpose. A thunderstorm is a gorgeous spectacle to watch, but one soon tires of it. The influential editorial page is the one that hits hard when the occasion demands it, and only then. When it does strike it shocks the complacency of its readers. It demands attention and action. The editorial page of the old morning *World* under Mr. Cobb was an outstanding example of argumentative editorial expression. Yet it did not save the *World*, for the newspaper was already on the way out while Mr. Cobb was hurling his most effective thunderbolts.

Editorial writing like most other things has changed with the passing years. The readers of the original *Tribune* bought it more to learn what Horace Greeley had to say than for any news it might contain. The same was largely true of the *Sun* under Charles A. Dana and the *Evening Post* under E. L. Godkin. Newspapers were owned by individuals then and were on the surface, at least, often personal organs and mediums for partisan expression. They were narrow in outlook, scant in news, frank in words, and employed bitter invective with abandon. Dana would refer to Joseph Pulitzer of the *World* as "Judas" Pulitzer; the *World* would respond by referring to Dana as Charles Ananias Dana. And so it would go back and forth evidently to the amusement of the two newspapers' readers. Editors would even comment on the personal appearance and dress of a rival editor.

Personal feuds in the press are now infrequent. While one newspaper may attack the policies of another, it is seldom that the editor or publisher is attacked or his sincerity questioned. Occasionally one editor may attack another by name, but the language is more polite than formerly and the discussion on a higher plane. The attacked editor more likely than not will ignore both the attacking editor and the attack. Today's metropolitan newspapers are large impersonal organizations, if not institutions, and have taken on the dignity of maturity.

No one will deny that there has been a decline in the influence of the editorial in the affairs of the nation. Municipal organizations have won elections time and again with the whole local press condemning them daily. Much was made of the sweeping Roosevelt victory of 1936, with a majority of the nation's editorial pages condemning his policies. What the editor says on the editorial page is not so important as it once was, and much has been made of this by critics of our newspapers. In this they are right, but they are completely wrong when they deduce from this, as many do, that the power of the press is waning. On the contrary, it is stronger than ever.

The fact is that the decline in the influence of the editorial page has coincided with the development of news coverage. When news coverage was scanty and partisan, readers looked to the comment of the editor, of men such as Greeley, for guidance; now with complete and objective news coverage they digest the front page and the full texts of speeches and documents inside and form their own opinions. The newspapers that criticized Roosevelt editorially published the full text of every speech and statement he made in the campaign, as well as those of his leading colleagues. They printed full reports on national conventions, on party platforms, on straw votes showing the sentiment of the country. They did as much also for his political opponents. Their readers were kept informed daily and were in a position to form an intelligent opinion on the issues—and

incidentally to differ with the opinions of the editors on the editorial page.

The radio and the public schools have also contributed to the declining influence of the editorial page. Since 1924 the radio has had a large rôle in our political life. Millions of listeners in 1936 heard the issues discussed by President Roosevelt and Governor Landon and were directly affected by the impact of their personalities. Meanwhile the widespread development of secondary and higher education in the past fifty years has taught more and more Americans to do their own thinking. They now want the facts; and they get them in the news columns. They then make their own decisions.

Most news editors are ready at the drop of the hat to prove that a good newspaper could be produced without an editorial page and without editorials, except perhaps an occasional one on some great issue, and that prominently displayed on page one. These editors feel that the space could better be devoted to more thorough news coverage. News editors have a habit of disagreeing with editorial writers, the one suppressing his personal prejudices and the other often displaying them by the terms of his employment. They often take pleasure in producing and printing facts that upset the editorial writers' pet theories. The truth is that no great newspaper has ever tried to get along without an editorial page, probably because the publisher, who meets the bills—and the pay roll—wants to express his convictions. Some day, somewhere, a real news editor will get control of a newspaper and try the experiment; and ten thousand colleagues will rise and give him a cheer.

The news editor feels that he is better informed than the editorial writer on any current event. He knows that the average editorial is based on the news that the news editor prints and he also knows that the news editor does not always print all the facts he has available. There are many reasons for this. One is physical limitation. There is only a limited amount of space for news in even the best newspaper. In a "tight" paper

he may be able to give only a half-column to a story for which he has material for several columns. The story must be condensed and much interesting detail left out. Another reason is the personal element. The news editor knows, but does not print, the fact that the popular leader dropped by the state political machine did not breathe a sober breath in his last term in office. He may also know that a certain statesman at a conference where the fate of the world was at stake had too much wine for his luncheon and readily conceded in the afternoon session what he had stubbornly fought in the morning session. Then there are the laws of libel. All the news is never printed, and never will be under any dispensation.

Editorial writers do get special information, of course. One of the principal functions of the chief Washington correspondent is to keep his editorial writers and publisher informed on political, legislative, and executive doings. This he does by telephone or by visit to the home office. The foreign correspondents also send confidential messages which are referred to the editorial writers and make visits home to inform their offices and to renew their American viewpoint. It is seldom, however, that the editorial writer is present at the event or visits the scene afterwards. Almost always he gets his information secondhand. One New York editorial writer who decided to visit and examine for himself a civic improvement about which he was to write gave his colleagues such a shock that it took some of them a week to recover their equanimity. Perhaps this explains the ineptness of many editorials. They have the atmosphere of the cloister. They do not come to grips with the realities of life often enough.

While readers may not vote or act on the advice of editorial writers and publishers, this does not mean that the editorial page itself is lacking in popularity. An elaborate study of reader interest made by the *Los Angeles Times* in 1938 proved this fact. An analysis was made of 50,000 questionnaires in which preferences were expressed on each of the newspaper's 113

news, picture, and feature classifications. It revealed that 70.26 per cent of the men and 67.72 per cent of the women read the editorial page, placing it sixteenth on the list of preferences and ahead of the most popular comic strip.

A survey by *The New York Times* of why its readers bought the newspaper served to prove the same point. It disclosed that 19 per cent followed the newspaper primarily for the editorial page. Others who obtained it for its foreign news, its financial news, or its sports news also read the editorial page.

One of the most interesting surveys of the editorial page in recent years was made by Norval Neil Luxon of the School of Journalism of Ohio State University, an account of which appeared in *Editor and Publisher* on April 11, 1936. Professor Luxon's study was made to determine the subjects dealt with on the editorial page. He tabulated the output of twelve newspapers in Ohio, New York, Chicago, Detroit, and Baltimore for the daily issues (Sundays excluded) of the months of January and February. Of the 3,206 editorials studied, 898, or 28 per cent, were devoted to local affairs; 313, or 10 per cent, to state affairs; 1,563, or 48 per cent, to national affairs, and 432, or 13 per cent, to international affairs. Classifying them further, he found that 573, or 17 per cent, dealt with economic problems, 1,137, or 35 per cent, with political problems, and 703, or 21 per cent, with social problems. Among less important groups he listed 179, or 5 per cent, on relief; 180, or 5 per cent, on crime; 97, or 3 per cent, on the veterans' bonus; 127, or 4 per cent, on education; 181, or 5 per cent, on taxation; 72, or 2 per cent, on the Ethiopian war, and 292, or 9 per cent, on the forthcoming election. Wide variations were also shown by individual newspapers in their choice of subjects. Hearst's *Chicago Herald and Examiner* devoted only 13 per cent of its editorials to local affairs while 70 per cent dealt with national problems. The *Cleveland Press* gave 64 per cent to local subjects and only 22 to national. The Cincinnati *Enquirer* had only 1 per cent on state subjects and 19 per cent on international.

And so it went. Each newspaper covered the events and the problems of interest to its own readers.

In the final analysis the editorial page must stand or fall on what goes into it. Its prestige, its reader interest, its influence on public affairs, will be no greater than the intelligence, honesty, courage, and sincerity of its editors. The American press remains one of the greatest vital critics in our democracy. In its news columns it has made steady progress over the past half-century and continues to forge ahead. In its editorial comment it has not fared so well. Yet considering both, it ranks as the best in the world today. True, the editorials of no American newspaper have the influence in national and international affairs of those of *The Times* of London and of the *Manchester Guardian*, but no English newspaper can match the news coverage of our best newspapers. *Pravda* of Moscow, *Der Angriff* of Berlin, and *Giornale d'Italia* of Rome wield great power because they express the ideas of their Communist, Nazi, and Fascist masters, and their readers must turn to them to find out what to do and to think. The American press, often working at cross-purposes and always independently, gathers the facts where it finds them and comments on events fearlessly. It makes its mistakes, sincere or otherwise, but it supplies the data for the untrammelled thinking of a great people. So doing, it is a powerful force in public and private life.

XIX. Libel, Ethics, Principles

CURIOSITY about our neighbors is deep-rooted in the best of us. Appetites for news vary, but there are few of us who do not relish and will not read a choice morsel of scandal—especially if it concerns a friend or an acquaintance. The fact that it involves social disgrace or financial ruin for the poor unfortunate makes it all the more interesting. The higher the eminence from which he falls the more exciting the story. If sex enters the case or lurks in the background, it makes the story almost irresistible. This is a queer world, and newspaper editors did not make it. Neither do they make the news; they merely record it.

But news editors must meet competition in news, and this competition has always been sharp, and probably always will be. Editors know human nature with all its weaknesses and cravings, for they are human themselves and are forever dealing with the follies and foibles of men and women. They must turn out newspapers that interest readers. They must have circulation. Naturally there is a temptation to feed morbid curiosity by appeal to the lower instincts when it means the difference between success and failure. Many editors do; but it is to the eternal credit of the American press that these have always been in the minority and that they have never been the ones honored and revered by their co-workers in journalism. Many editors have had to compromise their sense of decency to meet competition. Few do it from choice. The great majority, while taking the world as it is, deliberately appeals to all that is best in their readers.

Objectivity, fairness, and accuracy in the news are not enough; news must also conform to decency and good taste. The newspaper that enters the home should maintain moral standards that will not offend the sensibilities of the nation's mothers nor corrupt their young sons and daughters. The editor who tries to give a complete picture of contemporary life must, of course, deal with the bad as well as the good, but he can do it in a way that will give the truth without indelicacy. The exploitation of sex, the glorification of criminals, the invasion of the privacy of the individual, are seldom, if ever, pardonable. Almost as bad are exploitation of horror with stories full of blood and pictures of mangled bodies, exaggeration of the facts in crime news, the circulation of common gossip, and the needless destruction of the character of individuals.

It is not always easy for news editors to determine where to draw the line, and occasionally even the most conscientious and delicate will offend. This is why an effective code of professional ethics is so badly needed. Then the editors of a newspaper would know what their rivals were doing. They could work with more assurance. It would be easier to produce clean newspapers.

With freedom of the press guaranteed in the Constitution, news editors have complete liberty of action in advance of publication. Liberty does not mean license, however, and they must accept responsibility before the law for what they print. The newspaper, like the rest of the community, has no immunity to circulate baseless and malicious gossip. It must stand ready at all times to defend the truth of what it prints. When it abuses its privileges it must answer for that abuse civilly or criminally.

The federal government and each of the state governments have laws on libel. This is not the place to attempt a digest of them. Space would not permit. The average working newspaperman has only the vaguest idea of their exact terms. Few newspapermen have read the libel laws of the state in which they work. Nor is it necessary. The practical newspaperman

knows instinctively when he is on dangerous ground and takes measures to protect himself. He knows that the statements before and the actions of the municipal council, the state legislature, the Congress, and the civil and criminal courts of record, and of committees and other bodies drawing their authority from these sources, are privileged under the law. He knows that reasonable criticism of public officials can be and should be printed in the public interest. He knows that malice is difficult if not impossible to prove. What is more, he knows the reliability and authenticity of his news sources. He knows when he has documentary evidence to prove his statements. He knows when he is printing the exact truth. When he has doubts he qualifies his story or leaves it out of the newspaper. Few stories are worth the risk of a libel action. At all times he tries to tie the story to his news source so that the newspaper itself is not committed to it, beyond circulating it. He may use the phrases "it is alleged," "it is said," "the police said," etc., although these will not save him if the story is libelous, serving merely to mitigate the offense. On occasions he will consult the legal advisers of the newspaper.

There is scarcely an edition of a metropolitan daily newspaper that does not contain five or six potential libel suits. Its editors know it. News does not always come privileged; nor does it always come definite and provable in the courts. Criminals, racketeers, gamblers, quacks, shysters, ambulance chasers, abortionists, clip joints, embezzlers, bucket shops, crooked promoters, and grafting politicians do not leave evidence hanging around the premises for newspapermen. On the contrary, they cover their trails as best they can, often with the advice of clever lawyers. The best stories come at times from confidential sources that must be protected, even if in doing so the journalist goes to jail, which has happened. Reporters and editors are forever taking risks in printing news that they feel their readers should have in the public interest. In some instances editors may wait for official action. In others they may get the authorities to

bring charges so that the news may be privileged. In many others they go right out vigorously, despite the risk of libel actions and other reprisals, and print the facts regardless of the consequences. It would be a sad newspaper that did not hit from the shoulder when the occasion demanded it.

The news editor knows that each edition is searched for libel actions, both by men and women who do not like the news and by lawyers looking for a case. Yet there are surprisingly few libel suits. Generally the persons concerned cannot come into court with clean hands and are afraid of the consequent exposure. Other suits are attempted "shakedowns," and the newspaper knows it. As a result many publishers fight all libel actions to the courts of last resort, regardless of the evidence, and thus discourage the principals and their lawyers. In others it is difficult to prove damages or malice and so the best the plaintiff can expect is a six-cent verdict. Large verdicts are rare.

Most newspapers know from experience that almost all persons bringing libel suits have dark spots in their records and that a little investigating will discover them. The reaction of the honest person is to ask for a correction, and he invariably gets it. Editors never willingly or knowingly offend honest and sincere citizens. It does happen, however. A mistake in a street number may make the home of a respectable banker appear to be a house of prostitution. A mistake in the middle initial of a name may give the gangster or the thug the name of the honest lawyer. With several persons of the same name in the city, the wrong individual may be embalmed in the obituary page. These persons may be indignant about it, but they will be satisfied with an adequate correction. Nor will the editors wait for their demands, for the responsible editor always tries to keep the record straight and will correct his errors as soon as he discovers them.

Editors do not like libel actions, apart from the monetary cost and the loss of time involved, for they mean a violation of news standards. The competent editor prides himself on his

ability to gather the news correctly and to print it fairly, and he does not like readers proving the contrary in the courts. What is more, publishers do not like libel actions either, and obviously they will begin to question the ability of the news editor whose direction of the newspaper brings too many of them. Some of course are inevitable, for some are mere attempts at intimidation.

Not all abuses of freedom of publication and violations of editorial integrity are actionable in the courts of law. Many are well within the law and can be controlled only by a code of professional ethics rigidly enforced by some professional organization. Most of these come under what is popularly known as yellow journalism, or the sensational press. This kind of journalism is readily identifiable by its colossal headlines on sex scandals, its abundance and display of pictures of scantily dressed women, its featuring of trivial crime news and society gossip over the vital national and international news of the day, and in general its irresponsible exaggeration of news facts. It makes its appeal to the less discriminating and less informed readers. Yet it wins a large measure of public support; and this patronage, such as it is, brings large circulations, a great volume of advertising, and substantial profits to its catchpenny publishers and their subservient editors. Sensational journalism is unfortunate in a democracy that is based on a well-informed electorate. It is one of the penalties we pay for freedom of the press. There is less of it than there was a generation or two ago; but still too much.

Probably the most frequent of these abuses and the worst is the invasion of the privacy of the individual. Often it is difficult to avoid, for every time a citizen gets into trouble with the law, even if he is later proved innocent, there is violation of his privacy. Every edition of every newspaper will contain news that certain citizens would rather not have printed. The burning fires of press publicity singe many persons, but the conscientious news editor will be certain that in each case he is serving the

larger public interest. He does not exploit the private life of the individual or violate the sanctity of the home just to make another news story.

It is not necessary to sneak through a back window and purloin letters and photographs in order to violate the sanctity of the home. It can be done just as effectively by taking advantage of the mental distress of unfortunates in a tragedy or of the hysterical joy of the beneficiaries of good fortune. It is not often that events commanding the attention of the press strike the ordinary home, and when one does it overwhelms the average citizen. He is in no condition to deal with reporters when they arrive. He will pour out his troubles or his hopes in a flood of thoughtless words. The reporters, expert in gathering information, will ask subtle questions that bring out facts that, perhaps, should not be revealed or that may make him look ridiculous. Most persons are surprised and shocked when they read the result of their encounter with the reporters in cold type. Others, usually relatives, glory in the publicity. Relatives are thrilled by their pictures in newspapers and their names in columns of type. They enjoy the stir they cause in the community. They get a sense of exaltation and importance. The more publicity such people get the more they want. Later they may find that their homes have been wrecked and their lives blighted and that reporters are no longer interested in them. They return into oblivion, sadder but wiser.

The reporters and editors of serious newspapers are interested only in the bare facts of such stories. They protect the citizen against himself. They must deal with more important facts. There are occasionally, however, crime stories that arouse so much public interest that every newspaper will print every fact about them that it can gather. The Hall-Mills murders and the Lindbergh kidnapping were such. On these stories editors had to cater to an insensate public demand. They had to meet savage competition. If they did not give all the details their readers would turn to newspapers that did. When such news is in the

making circulations go up for the reason that thousands of readers buy two or more newspapers in their avid search for gruesome details. When the news itself is sensational, editors cannot be blamed for treating it sensationally.

The hippodroming of sensational trials, like the Hall-Mills and the Hauptmann trials, is regretted by all thoughtful journalists. But the responsibility is not all theirs; the radio, the lawyers, the friends of the accused, the court officers, and indeed, the court itself have major rôles in the melodrama. Ambitious prosecutors use an occasion of this kind for personal exploitation. They give out long statements to the press. They are interviewed on the radio. They pose for the photographers. Some have publicity advisers directing their activities. Then they expect to go on to the governorship or some other high political post on the wave of fame and popularity. Meanwhile the lawyers for the defense are not missing opportunities for personal build-up. Neither are the friends of the accused. They also enjoy the spotlight. Committees of bar associations and of the press have considered this evil; but they have not done much. The problem seems one for the presiding judge. He can certainly bar photographers from his court. He can hale the lawyers before him for their conduct of the case. He can control the conduct of the reporters in the courtroom. He can invest the whole trial with judicial calm and dignity. English judges do. It is not the duty of the press to correct court practices. It accepts them as it finds them. Until the judiciary handles this problem severely and controls it, news editors can hardly be censured for printing what their readers demand.

The trial of a case in advance in the newspapers is different, and when it occurs the press must bear most of the responsibility, although not all of it. Such offenses have never been common; there are fewer today than a decade ago, and still fewer than twenty-five years ago. There are some, however; enough to cause the New York County Lawyers' Association to call upon the judges to use their contempt power against newspapers

interfering with orderly justice. Admitting that there are instances of reckless reporting that make it difficult for the accused to get a fair trial by a jury drawn from the citizens of the community, where do the newspapers get the information that they print? The bulk of it comes from the offices of the self-seeking prosecutors and defense lawyers. Not a little of it comes from the police, and a policeman also likes to see his name in the newspaper, especially if he is credited with "breaking" the case. Some of it even comes from judges, who can be publicity conscious as well as dishonest and ignorant. The accused and his friends are also often among the contributors. The reporter does not fake his information, even if he may exaggerate it; he does not have to.

No news editor or reporter wants to act the rôle of judge and jury. Neither does a newspaper publisher desire to deny any man a fair trial. More often journalists are the champions of justice in the community. The legal profession and the judiciary have been under attack and it is easier to attempt to lay the blame on the press than to attempt self-criticism and reform. It is not often that a court has found it necessary to grant a change of venue to give the accused a fair trial; yet that is the only competent test. *Editor and Publisher* was able to say truthfully: "Every important newspaper contempt case in recent years has, in the end, shown up the cited editor as the real champion of public rights and the courts, too often, in no very pleasant light."

The exploitation of crime news and the glorification of criminals are other charges leveled at the press. They often come from the same sources—those largely responsible for the ineptitude of law enforcement in the United States. There is, however, a sound basis for these charges, for they are true of certain newspapers, not the best but nevertheless numerous and successful. No matter how they may treat crime and criminals, all news editors know that there is great public interest in such news. The local robbery, rape, or murder directly concerns

every person in the immediate neighborhood, and there are few neighborhoods that cannot produce a crime of some sort daily. The *Christian Science Monitor* alone of all the newspapers in the United States dares ignore such news.

There is a vast difference in the way newspapers treat criminals. The yellow newspaper runs column after column of details about him and his crime, often allowing the ignorant reader to picture him as clever, adroit, and fearless. It may use a cartoon strip to make the crime more graphic. It will print all the horrifying facts it can gather. It will print illustrations of him and his relatives. It will use seminude pictures of his cheap and characterless mistress with news stories of her love, loyalty, and distress, although she will soon vanish from the scene when his ill-gotten money is spent. It will follow him into jail and pay a high price (which his lawyers will later take) for his biography, which it will run in installments, making a hero of an ignorant, brutal thug. The serious, responsible newspaper will merely inform its readers of the activities of this lawbreaker and of the efforts to bring him to justice. If he is still at large, it may print a picture to help the police in apprehending him. It may refer to the deficiencies of his early home life and education as a lesson to the community. It will record his conviction and later his execution, but without heroics and without pictures of the electric chair.

In the one instance crime news is used to gratify the morbid curiosity and to appeal to the lowest instincts of the reader; in the other to inform the community of what is happening in its midst. In the one the glorification of the criminal stirs the imagination of young boys and girls and helps to raise a new crop of lawbreakers; in the other the exposure of the criminal and the certainty of retribution point a moral for the youth of the nation as well as for their parents, churches, and schools.

It is the same kind of yellow newspaper that features sex stuff, and for much the same reasons. Sex dominates the lives of millions of newspaper readers, many of whom give a sex inter-

pretation to human activities. These are the people who rush to the lascivious movie or play and who buy the erotic book. The exploitation of sex often means success of a sort. Certain individuals know it and capitalize it. Some of them own newspapers.

There is an abundance of sex material at hand for the news editor. There are the divorce scandals with their raids in hotel rooms, their co-respondents, their lust, and passions. There are the sex crimes with their horrible details and the terror they strike into the hearts of the fathers and mothers of the neighborhood. There are the breach of promise actions brought by mercenary ladies against the wealthy night club playboys. There are the raids on the strip-tease dancers. There are the arrests of the prostitutes. There are the drives against social diseases. There are the murders of scarlet ladies, usually involving a half-dozen indiscreet gentlemen. There are the various sun cults. Then there are always plenty of pictures, in all degrees of nudity, of actresses of the stage and screen, of fan and bubble dancers, of strip-tease dancers and models for commercial houses and artists, of society matrons and bathing girls, of nudists and whatnot. The editor who wants sex stuff does not have to look far for it.

It was not so long ago that a great New York newspaper ran advertisements for brothels and prostitutes. Such a thing would not be tolerated for a minute today. There has, in fact, been a steady improvement in journalistic morals in the past twenty-five years, and this has applied to the advertisements as well as the news columns. And this improvement has occurred at a time when we have come to speak more openly and broadly of sex problems. It is only recently that editors have dared to use such a word as syphilis in the news columns, although venereal diseases have long remained one of the acute problems of our civilization. We have less yellow journalism, much less, than we once had in the United States.

Good taste as well as good morals enter into the editing of

a good newspaper. Conscientious editors always handle sex news with extreme caution and deliberately underplay it. There are times when it is forced upon them in such a way that they cannot ignore it. The drive by the Board of Health against sex diseases certainly deserves encouragement. The campaign of the Legion of Decency merits recognition. The closing of the homosexual play on Broadway must be recorded. The decent elements of the community support the newspaper of good intentions and clean morals that works for civic betterment; they quickly see through the efforts of the newspaper that uses the same news material to play on the sex curiosity of the young and the lustful passions of degenerates.

The psychiatrist should deal with the mentality of readers who want horror in the news and of editors who cater to their depravity. It is difficult to understand why anyone should want to see revolting pictures of the charred and mutilated bodies of lynched kidnappers, the picture of Ruth Snyder in the electric chair, the picture of the bloody and broken body of the victim of the airplane or automobile wreck, the picture of the human wreckage of war. Yet some people do, and some newspapers print such pictures. Newspapers of the same kind heap on the horror in their news columns. They give every gruesome detail of the tragedy, the more horrible the agony the better. This is certainly not pleasant news to read with the breakfast cereal.

In a similar category are the purveyors of terror news, although these are scarce today, especially in the larger cities. The escape of the criminal lunatic, the ravages of the "slasher" of women, the nightly activities of the "firebug," the depredations of the wild animal, tiger or python, can be presented in a manner to strike terror into the souls of weak-minded individuals in the community. Such news was once popular with certain yellow journals, but having been worked over and over again it has lost much of its potency. Sometimes there was deliberate exaggeration, and this was, of course, doubly unpardonable. It is seldom that a community is endangered by any such terror,

and when it is, responsible newspapers co-operate with the proper authorities in allaying the fears of their readers.

The deliberate faking of news by newspapers is almost unknown these days, for the very simple reason, if no other, that the truth will ultimately become known and destroy the offending newspaper. This does not mean that there is not faked news in even the best newspapers. There is occasionally; but it is there because the editors have been duped. The propagandist, the hoaxer, the impostor, the faker, the swindler, the plain liar, are busy in all human activities, in science, in medicine, in society, in art, in literature, in antiques, in business, in politics, and in religion. Once in a while one of them gets the better of the careful and incredulous editor. The readiness with which American newspapers printed atrocity stories at the beginning of the World War is an illustration known to all intelligent readers. These stories came as official government information and were accepted as facts. Later, American editors learned valuable lessons in the ways of official propagandists. The newspaper editor likes to be victimized no more than anybody else. When he can do so he quickly exposes the impostor.

On rare occasions the newspaper editor is imposed upon by his own reporters. The most notable instance of this sort in recent years was the New York *Herald Tribune's* story in 1924, during prohibition, of a large ship outfitted as a cabaret at anchor off New York for the entertainment of thirsty Broadway. It was taken up by other newspapers. They and the Coast Guard joined in the search. The ship could not be found. It soon developed that the story was fabricated by a young reporter overanxious to win recognition. He lost his position, and the *Herald Tribune* ran a complete retraction and explanation.

Medical news is always troublesome. Here it is often difficult to recognize the faker. There is scarcely a month that there is not an announced cure for some disease. Methods of prolonging life, of rejuvenating the aged, of dieting for obesity, come with seemingly good sponsorship. The claims of patent medi-

cines in advertisements—they almost never get into the news columns—are hard to deal with intelligently, for while many are misleading, many others are meritorious. The medical profession rightfully ranks high ethically, but it, too, has its mercenary, self-seeking practitioners and its fringe of outright quacks. The result is that medical news is suspect in newspaper offices. Many editors will not print a word that is not approved or endorsed by the county medical society or sponsored by the state and national associations. Even then they do not escape criticism.

The report of an operation in Philadelphia a few years ago illustrates the difficulties of medical news. One of the best hospitals in that city gave out a story of an operation restoring sight to a young man who had been blind from birth. This story told of his elation at seeing the physical world for the first time and of his reaction to things and persons that he had felt but never seen before. It made a touching human-interest story. The news services and correspondents sent it out to newspapers. Many editors used it, making sure that every bit of information they gave was attributed directly to the hospital and the operating surgeon. One skeptical New York editor asked his Philadelphia correspondent to examine and question the patient; and when this was refused did not print the story. It later developed that the information given out by the hospital and the surgeon was grossly exaggerated. The newspapers were widely criticized by prominent members of the medical profession, but so far as can be determined not one of them criticized their colleague or the hospital. Nor did they take any action against such release of false information to the public.

Yet medical news cannot be ignored, for it is of vital interest to millions of newspaper readers. Every development in the treatment of cancer, no matter how tenuous, brings hope to thousands. The same is true of a dozen other diseases. Such information cannot be left to the medical journals. It demands wider circulation. The discovery of insulin, for instance, was a

great news story that affected the lives of millions. The experiments with sulfanilamide and its derivatives, and the resulting cures, made interesting reading. The ultimate cure for cancer will make one of the greatest news stories of all time. The difficulty from an editor's viewpoint is to determine when to use the story—and from whom to take it. The physician's idea that the editor wants to make a story is the sheerest nonsense; editors have more news than they can find space to print. Editors merely want to give correct information to their readers, and when physicians make news they want to have it. All news editors would welcome laws controlling patent-medicine announcements and some working arrangement with medical associations to give the public the truth.

The overwhelming majority of news editors want to keep news columns clean, honest, fair, and accurate. It is not always easy in the kind of world we live in. Yet many do. Obscenity is barred in all decent newspapers. Even such words as "hell" and "damn" rarely get into type. If they are used by the President or the Mayor in an official statement, that cannot very well be overlooked. Offensive forms are generally avoided. The sensibilities of readers are always considered. Matters of race and religion are carefully handled and in a way not to cause discrimination or to incite trouble. The murderer is not referred to as an Italian or a Catholic. The bankrupt is not referred to as a Jew. The swindler is not referred to as an Englishman and an Episcopalian. The general practice is to identify by name, age, occupation and address.

Editors also try to avoid dragging the names of important persons into crime news just because these persons happen to be relatives of the accused. But if the President's nephew, the Governor's cousin, the Mayor's aunt, figure in the news it is almost impossible to avoid mention of the connection, for it is this connection that makes the story important. Editors realize that it is unfair to bring in the "dry" Senator's name every time his worthless son is arrested for drunkenness, but without

it there is no story. They either use the name or omit the story.

The importance of the person and the importance of the scene enter into every story. It is doubtless unfair to use the name of the fashionable hotel in connection with some sordid crime, for it hurts the innocent owners and the hundreds of other persons residing in it, but the quality of the hotel helps to make the quality of the story.

There is one thing that all editors do almost without exception: they protect the good name of virtuous women and of young boys of good family. They do not want to be responsible for blighting the future of either. The name of the girl in the rape case is not used, nor is that of the young boy committing a crime of foolish youth.

The Negro, however, almost never gets a fair break in the American press. When he commits a crime, or does anything else that is discreditable, the fact that he is a Negro is specified in the news story. When he figures in a disaster or a tragedy that of itself minimizes the story. Thirty Negroes killed in an Arkansas tornado make a couple of paragraphs on an inside page; thirty whites would merit page-one display. The Negro makes important news only when he invades the precious prerogatives of the whites—their professions or their fashionable residential sections. His freakish religious ambitions or ridiculous antics may get news treatment, while his social, industrial, and educational development since the days of slavery is ignored. In defense of news editors it should be said that most Negroes still walk in the humbler paths of life and that few of them have risen to positions of national prominence. Nevertheless, the Negro is ostracized journalistically as much as he is socially. There is a "Jim Crow" standard for news.

There is a temptation, both for news editors and reporters, to take care of their friends in the news and to do no more than they must for their enemies. Unconsciously they may overplay the one and underplay the other. Naturally, newspapermen like to take care of good news sources. They will feel kindly

disposed towards the man who gives them the good news story, perhaps confidentially. And as naturally they will not feel kindly disposed to the man who rebuffs them. Many a second-rate politician has risen to prominence because he knew how to deal with reporters, and because they liked him personally. The man who dares snub the representatives of the press does not often get a good press, and in a democracy does not usually reach the heights. Generally a man is presented to the public in the press as he presents himself to its reporters.

Colonel Charles A. Lindbergh's feud with the press comes to mind in this connection. His position is understandable. Most news editors are sympathetic. He suffered much from yellow journalists. His rights as a private citizen were exploited unmercifully. He endured a great tragedy that may be attributed to too much publicity. He was finally driven into temporary exile. He wants to be let alone. Yet there is something to be said for the press. He was not averse to news publicity on the way up. Newspapers contributed to his fame and also incidentally to his financial security. He is definitely news. The public wants to know what he is doing. He knows it. His efforts to dodge reporters and photographers only serve to make them more persistent, for no reporter wants to return to his office without his story and no photographer without his picture. A little frankness and more consideration on both sides would doubtless solve the problem and make life more pleasant for all concerned.

Feuds between news gatherers and news makers are not common. They do not pay either side. The city editor wants news facts and not malice. If his reporter is antagonizing a news source deliberately he may switch him. On the other hand, if he finds that his reporter is being abused he will stand by him till Doomsday. Certain public officials have asked city editors to take men off assignments because they did not like them or their stories. Presidents have asked to have less-informed and less-critical men assigned to the White House. Senators have

denounced individual correspondents from the floor of their august chamber. Men of this caliber like laudatory news and cannot take criticism. With an exalted opinion of themselves, they consider themselves the sole arbiters of the public welfare. Everything considered, few spite stories get into newspapers.

Often stupid handling of press arrangements makes the work of the reporters doubly hard and certainly does not contribute to journalistic good will. An outstanding example of this kind was the Canadian tour of George VI and Queen Elizabeth. These seekers of good will certainly wanted a good press, for how else could the 136,000,000 inhabitants of Canada and the United States know about them and their trip? Yet fifty-two reporters assigned to cover their tour, men and women representing the great newspapers of Britain, Canada, and the United States, were placed on the pilot train, which preceded the royal couple and often departed from a town before the reception took place. They jokingly referred to themselves as the decoys for anyone with evil intentions towards the royal train. They had little opportunity for observation of the royal visitors and often poor facilities for filing their stories. Food and sleep were frequently difficult, while a bath was almost out of the question. Yet these reporters, working under adverse conditions and taking much of their information secondhand, gave the King and Queen a good press. There could be no higher tribute to their sense of public responsibility. They did not allow the discourtesy and inefficiency of awe-stricken officials to interfere with their own duty. They did not get the color and human sidelights that would make good reading and heighten public interest in the royal visitors, but they did the best they could in the trying circumstances.

Both the newspaper editor and reporter want to keep the record straight. The editor not only strives to present a fair and accurate picture of his time to his readers; he strives to do as much for the historian who will later be consulting his columns. The same is true of the reporter. The man on the assignment

wants to offer a true portrayal of the situation he is covering. Take, for instance, the correspondent at Shanghai. His dispatches will deal with the Chinese situation from day to day. He will be wrong at times, for it is not always easy to get the full facts. At other times he will have to file his dispatch to make his edition with the story still unfolding. But when he has the whole truth, which he inevitably gets, he sends it along, and over the years his dispatches embrace a complete, fair, and truthful picture of events. He is the historian of current events, and the historian of the future will in large measure rely on the facts he has gathered. The newspaper does the same for the community in which it circulates and for the larger news of the nation and the world. The editor and the reporter, who take their work seriously, and the conscientious publisher spare no expense and no trouble to keep their readers correctly informed.

Ethical standards are all important in journalism, from the viewpoint both of the working newspaperman and of the American public. Every journalist and every newspaper has a code of some sort, but to date there has been no wide acceptance of any one individual code. Efforts in this direction have been made by the American Society of Newspaper Editors, by the American Newspaper Guild, and by the American Press Society. Unless publishers will agree on a code of their own and enforce it, the best hope of one seems from the newspaper workers, either through the Guild or the APS. The Guild adopted a code at its convention in St. Paul in 1934, but so far has made no great effort to make it a part of its contracts with publishers. The APS at this writing is drafting its code and will ask publishers to accept it voluntarily.

The Guild's code follows:

The committee [on ethics] considers it basic policy of the American Newspaper Guild:

1. That the newspaperman's first duty is to give the public accurate and unbiased news reports, and that he be guided, in his con-

tacts with the public, by a decent respect for the rights of individuals and groups.

2. That the equality of all men before the law should be observed by the men of the press; that they should not be swayed in news reporting by political, economic, social, racial, or religious prejudices, but should be guided only by facts and fairness.

3. That newspapermen should presume persons accused of crime of being innocent until they are convicted, as is the case under the law, and that news accounts dealing with accused persons should be in such form as not to mislead or prejudice the reading public.

4. That the Guild should work through efforts of its members or by agreement with editors and publishers to curb the suppression of legitimate news concerning "privileged" persons or groups, including advertisers, commercial powers, and friends of newspapermen.

5. That newspapermen shall refuse to reveal confidences or disclose sources of confidential information in court or before other judicial or investigating bodies; and that the newspaperman's duty to keep confidences shall include those he shared with one employer even after he has changed his employment.

6. That the news be edited exclusively in the editorial rooms instead of in the business office of the daily newspaper.

7. That newspapermen shall behave in a manner indicating independence and self-respect in the city room as well as outside; and shall avoid any demeanor that might be interpreted as a desire to curry favor with any person.

Your committee also urges the condemnation of the following practices as being harmful to the public interest, the newspapers, and the newspapermen:

1. The carrying of publicity in the news columns in the guise of news matter.

2. The current practice of requiring the procuring or writing of stories which newspapermen know are false or misleading, and which work oppression or wrong to persons and to groups.

3. The acceptance of money by newspapermen for publicity which may be prejudicial to their work as fair reporters of the news. Your committee urges the particular condemnation of the practice of writing paid publicity by staff political writers, and the acceptance by

sports editors and writers of money from promoters of alleged sporting events.

4. The practice of some newspaper executives in requesting newspapermen to use influence with officials in matters other than the gathering of news.

The code of the late Fred Fuller Shedd, editor of the Philadelphia *Bulletin* and former president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, as given by his son Karl Eastman Shedd to *Editor and Publisher* follows:

1. You shall love your work with all your heart and all your soul; you shall serve it with all your strength and all your power.

2. You shall believe that the newspaper is the servant of the people; that they are dependent on it; therefore, that news must be fact and news which is not reliable is worse than useless. You shall serve no other master for price or preferment, for position or privilege. Your duty and obligation is to your paper, its readers and the community.

3. You shall seek to know the people of your community. Only so can you understand what interests them and appreciate the value of news.

4. You shall not lie about any person or any thing.

5. You shall not wantonly or carelessly injure your neighbor's—any person's—repute, for a good name is the most valuable possession and right.

6. You shall be accurate; you shall be diligent; you shall be intelligent as to anything about which you write, so that what you write shall be intelligible to the reader, who has a right to an understanding of the news.

7. You shall be clean and decent in your personality and in your work, so that you shall command the respect of others for yourself and for your paper. You shall be dependable so that men and women shall trust you with the news. You shall invite confidence in yourself and beget confidence of your readers in your paper.

8. You shall remember that your paper is to be read by all—men, women and children—and that it must be fit to be read by all.

9. You shall be fair, tolerant, merciful when warranted. You

shall endeavour to do by others as you would have others do by you.

10. You shall recognize the moral law as well as the statute; you shall be a square-dealer, a fair player.

Ultimately some form of code of ethics will find acceptance in journalism, doubtless embodying the principles, or most of them, of the two quoted above. When it does it will raise the standards of the newspaper profession, make life and work much easier for publishers, editors, and reporters, and result in better newspapers for the reading public. Until that time sincere and conscientious journalists will do the best they may in the prevailing circumstances, meeting news conditions and news competition as they find them.

XX. Freedom of the Press

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.—Constitution of the United States, Amendments, Article I.

FREEDOM of the press is one of the four basic liberties guaranteed to Americans by the Constitution of the United States and the most difficult to maintain inviolate. It is the most vital of the four to the ordinary citizen, for the press is the leading defender of the other three. It alone invokes the wrath of predatory and subversive forces in government and in industry.

Dealing daily with issues that affect the lives and business of millions of citizens, telling them of their neighbors, of their governments, of the world at large, bringing them the information on which they form their opinions, and defending their rights on many matters, a great power for good and a potential power for evil, ambitious politicians and businessmen attempt to control the policies of the American press and to make it do their bidding. The news it prints, the opinions it expresses, must necessarily touch many controversial issues on which public feeling is high and invite attack by those directly exposed or hurt. The greater its public service the more enemies it can make. If tyranny comes to America freedom of the press will be the first

of the four liberties to be suppressed, for the tyrant, no matter what his disguise, cannot control the activities of a people with a free press; and when it goes the other three will quickly disappear also. No nation can be free today without free newspapers.

It is the tragedy of our age that hundreds of millions of people have lost their right to a free press or have never known the privilege, and instead have a propaganda press that feeds them what tyrannical governments want them to know—usually colored and exaggerated information that robs them of their intelligence and helps further to debase them. In Germany, Italy, Russia, Spain, Turkey, Poland, Arabia, Egypt, Iran, Thailand, China, Japan, Brazil, and a dozen other countries rigid censorships control news and editorials in the native press and attempt to regulate the transmission of news to the newspapers in other countries. In a dozen more countries and territories the press faces great difficulties in publishing the truth, although complete regimentation is not attempted. The world trend for a decade or more has definitely been towards a controlled press. Even here in the United States our free newspapers have had occasional causes for alarm, but censorship has never been suggested, excepting for a mild voluntary form during the World War.

Freedom of the press implies not only freedom to print the news but also freedom to gather it. This is especially important in democracies, where no one would dare openly to regulate the press but where subtle methods are employed to control the flow of news from sources to the press and thus to the public, and where undue influence or intimidation may be tried to force newspapers to serve special interests. Freedom to publish would be worthless without complete freedom in gathering the facts and complete freedom in writing, in editing, and in displaying the news.

Freedom of the press also implies not only political freedom but economic freedom. The individual newspaper must have a chance

to live in a free economy. It takes capital to start and produce a newspaper. So long as we live and work under a capitalistic system our newspapers can be free only when they have economic independence, and that means they must make reasonable profits, enough to pay moderate dividends and build up safe reserves against inevitable adversity. When you deplete the capital by a denial of profits you kill the newspaper. A modern newspaper can be mortally wounded in a dozen ways through its business office. It can be taxed to death.

When freedom of the press was written into the Constitution, on December 15, 1791, American newspapers were few and small. The individual newspaper revolved around the personality of its publisher. He himself, perhaps with the help of an assistant or two, would gather the local news, write the editorials, set all the type by hand, work the hand press, and distribute the newspaper. The brief news stories dealt mostly with community affairs. The few items of national and state news came by stagecoach and the foreign "intelligence" by letter, crossing the Atlantic on sailing ships. Timeliness was not a dominating factor; news from abroad might arrive five weeks after the event. Circulation was limited to a few hundred copies, never more than a few thousand. The capital investment was trivial. Often the newspaper was an adjunct of a job-printing office. Sometimes it was published to oblige the printer's friends. The nation was largely agricultural. Its economy was simple. Competition in news was still to be developed. Mass production was unknown in any industry.

Apart from personal assault or arrest it was difficult to bring pressure on such publishers. Mobs did attack printing offices and destroy presses and beat up publishers. Infuriated individuals resorted to the horsewhip or challenged the courageous or venal publisher to fight a duel. Few publishing disasters, however, were so irreparable that the persistent publisher could not acquire another press and either resume publication or start a new newspaper in another community.

Today the situation is different. The rotary press, the linotype, the telephone, the telegraph, speeding production and making world coverage of news possible, brought in a new kind of newspaper—the mass-production newspaper, with its thousands of workers, its huge plant, its leased wires and many news bureaus, its circulation in hundreds of thousands. It is a costly and complex machine, depending for its life on a large measure of public support from both readers and advertisers. It is a sensitive machine that touches most phases of modern civilization and must keep abreast of modern progress. It must have a large assured income to make the necessary expenditures for its staff, its newsprint, its mechanical equipment and power, and its distribution. It can be hurt in many ways: by a boycott by its readers; by a boycott of the products of its advertisers; by refusal to give it the news; by punitive taxes; by labor-union demands for unreasonable wages, hours, and working conditions; by governmental regulation of its business as a business; by unfair attack on its treatment of the news by pressure groups and high government officials. All these and more have been tried here in the United States at one time or another.

Publishers still consider themselves the sole protectors and sole custodians of the freedom of the press, overlooking the march of time and changed conditions. In these days of mass production and great industrial machines the man who operates the machine is just as important in the national picture as the owner of that machine. In many instances he is more important. The press of the United States is not confined to machines and publishers; more than thirty thousand men and women, reporters, editors, and editorial writers are part of it. They are the men and women who operate the machine. It is their courage, their intelligence, their sense of duty, that make the press the great force it is in America today. They, too, should share in the constitutional guarantee.

The founders of the Republic, living and thinking in their simple day, could not visualize the great mass-production press

of today. If they had they would doubtless have worded the general terms of the first amendment differently. It is true that in principle any citizen of any age, race, color, or creed, can start a newspaper, but that principle loses its authority in the face of economic facts. The constitutional guarantee would thus be confined to men and women of large means—to the possessors of millions of dollars undreamed of in 1791. The authors of the first amendment certainly did not intend it as class legislation. They certainly did not intend to give freedom of expression to a handful of wealthy individuals and exclude the great body of writers and thinkers who work for the press.

True, the individual today can write and publish a brochure or pamphlet, but that does not count in the vast flood of newspaper circulation. Who reads broadsides any more? Freeman Tilden takes his courage in hand and prints his ideas of affairs monthly, but the ordinary mortal cannot. A letter to the editor may or may not be printed, according to its subject matter and the available space, but on the whole the average man or woman cannot be sure of free expression in print. The average individual turning to the press today for a profession must be content to work for a salary and under direction. He cannot be certain of a proprietary interest in the newspaper or of the circulation of his private views.

How can the constitutional guarantee apply to journalists in general?

There has been no final ruling by any court on the subject. In fact no working journalist, so far as this writer knows, has as yet insisted on the constitutional guarantee's application to him. That does not mean, however, that such a thing cannot happen. Under the present popular interpretation of the Constitution as a living, flowing body of law that adapts itself to changing American conditions the courts should and may take cognizance of changed conditions in the American press. Conscientious publishers will not wait for that time, for they will be ready to

share the benefits of our basic law with their co-workers. This can be done in two ways.

First, the working reporter, editorial writer, or editor should have freedom of action and judgment. He should be free to gather the exact facts of the story and free to write the truth as he finds it. No man should be required to write what he knows to be untrue. No man should be forced to "angle" a story to favor any special interest. No man should be forced to overplay or underplay a story for any reason. The news should be gathered for what it is and displayed for what it is worth in interest or importance to the readers of the newspaper. The editorial should be written by a man who sincerely believes in what it says. There are newspapers today, unfortunately too few, that do just that, and they are recognized by intelligent readers as honest purveyors of objective and fair news.

No one, however, will deny the publisher and his editors the right of free judgment in selecting the man to cover the story, to write the headline, or to do the editorial. Once that man is selected, however, he should have complete liberty of action and judgment in determining the facts and writing them. Capable and sincere reporters and news editors should be free to produce the best newspaper they can for the readers. The publisher who assures this liberty extends to his co-workers the same freedom he claims for himself under the Constitution.

Second, the working journalist should have economic security. He should be reasonably safe in his position, removable only for incompetence or abuse of his rights, and he should be certain of a decent livelihood for himself and his family. He should have assurance of a comfortable old age. The abject reporter or editor is the most abject of all animals. Courage, intelligence, sound judgment are vital in all phases of newspaper work, and they cannot be expected of the man afraid of losing his job, worried over the fate of his family, and without pride in himself and his mission in life. The shabby, craven reporter or editor is the man approachable by the bribe.

The reporter is the front for his newspaper and for the American press. It is he who faces the President in the White House, Hitler in Wilhelmstrasse, the general on the field of battle, the grafting politician, the bulldozing financier, the leering gangster, the society lady. The editor is the man behind the scenes who passes judgment on the events of a turbulent world. It is he who makes the newspaper and gives it character and integrity. There is an old Latin proverb that says: "No one can give what he has not got." This is true of the American press. No newspaper is better than the men and women who make it. Well-paid journalists, safe in their standing in the community, with individual pride and courage, make newspapers that reflect their character. Craven journalists produce craven newspapers.

The American press is the one industry with a constitutional guarantee. It got this guarantee because it has a national function. It is not favored above all other industries just to make profits for invested capital. The ownership of a newspaper carries a responsibility beyond the ordinary conduct of business. It is charged with the national duty of providing full and accurate information to the American people, a duty that should be fulfilled without fear or favor and without consideration for its own profits. Many of its publishers and thousands of its editorial workers take this responsibility seriously. There are some who do not; they should be digging sewers or selling neckties.

No one will deny that there have been and continue to be grave abuses of freedom of the press. Men being what they are that was inevitable from the start. There are publishers who consider only their own selfish interests. There are publishers who are tools for sinister groups. There are publishers who require their editors to invade the privacy of the individual, exploit crime, glorify gangsters and racketeers, and spread sex stuff over their pages to win a financial success that their intelligence and integrity do not merit. There are publishers who prate long and loud about freedom of the press and take a sadistic delight in discharging faithful and competent editors

for no adequate reason. There are publishers so small mentally that they cannot tolerate an independent thought by their editors, even in matter written for outside publication. There are base, cowardly publishers who misrepresent the true facts of important news events, men who are afraid of the truth, who berate their political opponents and business rivals in gross terms and falsely espouse worthy causes just to turn them to their own profit. And all these publishers have no difficulty in obtaining competent reporters and editors to do their bidding.

On the other hand there are publishers of high principle, of outstanding courage, of unquestioned integrity, who are constantly striving to make their newspapers true mirrors of contemporary life, correct interpreters of world events, and champions of every worthy cause. These men follow the best traditions of journalism and represent the American press at its best. There are many more, men of moderate intelligence and good intentions, who turn out newspapers notable neither from a business nor an editorial viewpoint but which for all that do a good job in their communities. Taken by and large, American publishers are honest, independent, enterprising, and intelligent, and the newspapers they produce are for all their many faults the best in the world today. The freedom that makes the bad newspaper possible also gives us the good newspaper, and fortunately for the United States the good more than counterbalances the bad. In a world of uncertainty the American press is the highest expression of human liberty.

No one will contend that the American press is completely free. In fact it is doubtful if absolute, abstract freedom, the concept of the philosophers, is possible in practical life. The newspaper, its staff, and its publisher are subject to pressure from many sources. They must interest and attract readers and thus maintain circulation. They must publish news that deals with living men and women, governments, pressure groups, and every race, creed, and color. They must obtain a large volume of advertising. They must make a living. They must meet com-

petition. The tides of life swirl about newspaper offices. While most newspapers weather the maelstrom, some are engulfed and destroyed. Like individuals they must frequently resort to compromise.

When pressure is mentioned the man on the street thinks first of advertisers, but actually pressure by advertisers is not common and is seldom important. Both the advertising man and the editor are always aware of this popular criticism and make sure that there is seldom justification for it, the one by not asking favors, the other by not granting any. The editors of a successful newspaper have no truck with advertising solicitors and usually do not even know them. The solicitor may make promises in order to close a contract, but to get the editors to honor them is something else. News editors instinctively resent business-office dictation, and particularly resent advertising agency "readers." Often the corporation or individual that does not advertise gets a better break in the news columns.

Most metropolitan newspapers maintain an advertising censorship. *The New York Times*, for instance, rejects hundreds of thousands of agate lines of advertising yearly because it does not conform to *The Times'* standards; and still more is not solicited or offered because it has no chance of gaining admission to *The Times'* columns. Such newspapers have a high sense of responsibility to their readers. They do not want their readers imposed upon or swindled. When such things happen, and they do occasionally despite the newspaper's vigilance, the publisher concerned takes criminal action against the advertiser. More than one swindler who had the bad luck to use the columns of a reputable newspaper is now serving time in prison.

Advertising censors check on the financial and ethical standing of the advertiser. They prohibit extreme and unreasonable announcements, and generally the use of superlatives. They throw out "come-on" advertisements by dollar-a-week furniture, clothing, and jewelry merchants. They exclude "finance"

companies that offer easy loans to workers without collateral or co-signers on seemingly attractive terms that are actually usury of the worst kind. They refuse to allow changes in prices between editions, which some of the best department stores attempt after seeing the advertisements of their competitors. They require advertisements to meet proper moral standards, although allowing illustrations in announcements addressed to women that would not be passed for the news columns. They insist upon typographical standards, toning down garish effects and colossal black type to make advertisements conform to the general appearance of the newspaper. They also watch for libel and other law violations. They have wide latitude in their work and almost always the complete support of publisher and editors.

The metropolitan newspaper is often stronger financially than its greatest advertiser. In many cases it can better afford the loss of the advertisement, its decrease in revenue being smaller proportionately. Although the public never hears of them, there are such things as "strikes" by advertisers. In these several advertisers "gang up" on a newspaper and by withholding their advertising attempt to win a reduction in rates or some other concession. *The New York Times* has beaten several such strikes in the past decade, in one case a strike by eleven department stores. In these strikes the newspaper sells the normal advertising position of the strikers to their business rivals, and the increased trade by the rivals and the drop in that of the strikers bring results. The strikers are usually glad to get back into the newspaper, sometimes at higher rates.

While the newspaper can handle the individual advertiser, the rapid growth of the large advertising agencies seems to offer a threat for the future. The large agencies now handle the accounts of a dozen or more powerful corporations and so control the placing of a tremendous volume of business. They also act as advisers to these corporations on merchandising and sometimes on social, economic, labor, and political conditions. Such

agencies are in a position to exert great pressure on newspapers. With social, industrial, and political demands on corporations becoming greater and greater, it will be only natural for these corporations to fight back with all the weapons at their command, and when they do the millions of dollars that they spend annually in newspapers, in magazines, and on the radio, will not be overlooked. So far the advertising agencies have been well behaved, but the threat is there, and one would be unduly optimistic not to expect an attempt to use so powerful a weapon in the coming years. How the newspapers will meet it remains to be seen. Courageously, let us hope.

Right now the greatest pressure on American newspapers comes from within their own offices and is inherent in their ownership. As stated before, it takes a large capital investment to conduct a modern newspaper; and capital is always class conscious. If the investor happens to be a banker, a railroad, a steel corporation, a shoe-machinery manufacturer, or a newsprint mill, the probabilities are that he or it have no realization of newspaper traditions or of the high purposes of the American press and will use the newspaper property like any other property to further special and selfish interests. Fortunately the vast majority of newspapers in the United States are owned by individuals or families brought up in the profession. Yet even individual owners have outside interests and associate in private life with persons of their own station. Obviously they imbibe the ideology of their own class and espouse their class interests. Then the newspaper, itself, is big business and must face in its own activities as a business most of the problems that confront the vested capital of the nation. It, too, tends to be class conscious.

No matter how sincere of purpose the newspaper is, the interests of the owner and of the newspaper as a business are apt to affect the policy of the newspaper as a purveyor of information to the public. Editors and reporters want their newspapers to prosper, first, because financial success is accepted as the acco-

lade of public approval of their work, and, second, because they like livable salaries and the money must be obtained by the business office before it can be paid to them. Unconsciously they may look askance at developments that conflict with the interests of the owners and approve of developments that further them. There is a tendency, even on the best newspapers, for the economic, political, and social views of the owners to seep down through the entire organization. This tendency may make editors sympathetic with the status quo and with the maintenance of institutions that have outlived their usefulness.

This does not mean that reporters and editors deliberately falsify or slant the news. They don't. What happens is much more subtle. Reporters viewing the event and editors passing judgment on it are inclined, be it ever so slightly, to see it from the publisher's angle. They doubtless want the approval of their superiors, for interesting assignments, promotion, and higher salaries usually await such approval. Few will bite the hand that feeds them. Almost without their knowing it the news favors the owner's viewpoint. The story in which the publisher is interested becomes a "good story," and vice versa.

There are publishers so forthright, however, that they turn over the coverage of the news to their editors, never interfere with their judgment, and insist that both sides be printed on every important issue. Such publishers feel that a reputation for fairness and accuracy is their newspapers' greatest asset. There are publishers who confine their financial interests to their newspapers, investing their surplus funds in state and federal bonds, and who want the facts regardless of whom they help or hurt, including themselves. There have been instances, not very many, where the news and editorials of a newspaper have been in direct conflict with the wishes of the owners, where courageous editors have gone right ahead with what they knew to be right despite the consequences. In other cases editors have fought out the issues with the publisher, and in some cases won him over to their views.

For some time there has been criticism of labor news in the American press. The New Deal insisted over and over again that it did not get a fair break in the newspapers. Radical groups denounce their treatment by the press. They denounce newspaper owners.

There is some foundation for all these attacks. In the case of labor the difficulty has often been due to a lack of understanding. This has been remedied to a large extent by the employing of experts. The New Deal always confused news and editorials. No one can successfully argue that President Roosevelt and his policies have not been explained at length to the American people in the news columns, even when he was berating publishers and his policies were hurting newspaper properties. Having presented the facts to the people, publishers and their editors felt free, as was their right, to attack these policies in the editorial pages—which many of them did. Governments like a laudatory press, and the New Deal was no exception. As for the radicals, they get news treatment on the basis of their importance in the national picture. Obviously editors did not consider them as important as they thought themselves. When they become a dominating force in America they will also dominate its news; but not till then.

Admitting that there is room for improvement in newspaper ownership, what can be done about it? A government press is certainly not the solution. Political control means political propaganda and a supine, regimented press. The Russian press illustrates this. Federal regulation is no better, as has been amply demonstrated in Germany, Italy, Spain, and elsewhere. Pressure-group control we already have: the labor press for instance. The newspapers of the various special interests in the United States are almost without exception narrow and biased in viewpoint, unfair to their opponents, inadequate in their treatment of the general news, and given to exaggeration and overdisplay of their own affairs. The ideal ownership is by the men and women who produce newspapers: this however is not

practical in present economic conditions, for the workers lack the necessary capital and would have to borrow from banks or other outside interests which could then interfere; and because such ownership would raise issues of management and policy that would make for confusion and indecision. It seems that Americans must struggle along with our present capitalistic control. There is nothing better in sight.

The most alarming development in our American press ownership is the rapid trend towards monopoly, and monopoly in the press is even more lethal than in any other industry. In more than twelve hundred American cities and towns one man or one corporation owns the one or more daily newspapers printed in the community. This gives one man or one corporation a large measure of control over the thoughts and activities of the neighborhood, a power that should not be given to one private individual, whether the publisher or the president of the corporation, for no one man is big enough, honest enough, or fair enough for the job. When this one man or corporation happens to be partisan politically, which is often the case, and partisan economically and socially, other viewpoints may not be presented in the community.

Moreover monopoly is bad for the press itself. It makes for laxity in news gathering and bias in editorial expression. The owner can adopt a "take it or leave it" attitude towards his readers, and they have no choice but to buy his newspaper or subscribe to an out-of-town newspaper with the delay in getting the news and the loss of much local news. He can also take much the same attitude towards his staff. His employees must accept his working conditions or move to another community. This often forces them to acquiesce in things that they would not otherwise tolerate. The net result is that there is a definite tendency in such communities towards lower journalistic standards. Sharp competition is vital to a good press.

There is also a trend in America towards standardization of the press, towards making one newspaper much like the other.

All newspapers take news from the Associated Press, the United Press, or the International News. Hundreds take the same comic strips, cartoons, political columns, beauty hints, cooking recipes, and other features from the great syndicates. Nearly all use the same mass-production machinery, which means similarity in physical appearance. All deal with the international labor unions in the mechanical departments. Many are forced to bargain in the editorial and business offices with the American Newspaper Guild, which demands its guild shop in Los Angeles as it does in Boston. Then there are the chain newspapers, the Scripps-Howard newspapers, the Hearst newspapers, the Gannett newspapers, the Scripps League, the Ridder newspapers, and others. Finally the publisher is probably a member of one of the publishers' associations, which supplies ideas on management and policy. As a consequence the ideas of a comparatively few men are spread upon the pages of the nation's press, and it becomes harder and harder for the individual newspaper to maintain its own separate character.

Pressure from the outside is exerted on newspapers even in the freest of democracies. Every newspaper caters to some group of readers and is forever hearing from it. Some readers, usually the more influential, call on the publisher. Others protest personally or by telephone to editors and reporters. Still others resort to letters to the editor. In any event newspapers always know how their readers feel and what they want. This necessarily affects treatment of the news. No newspaper would dare affront all its readers. It could not, and live. On the contrary reader pressure is carefully studied, and usually editors go too far in satisfying it. Publishers and editors do not like declining circulations.

And the circulation manager also makes his demands on the news editors—and in no uncertain terms. He has the job of merchandising the newspaper, and he wants the minimum of sales resistance on the part of his prospective customers. His salesmen and distributors report to him, and if possible he

makes certain that their demands are met. He may ask that a suburban civic movement get better news treatment because he is making a campaign in a particular neighborhood. He may want more local news in the late editions or more college news in the early editions. He may want more crime news or more sex stuff, or make other requests that would mean a lowering of news standards. Circulation managers are more concerned with volume than they are with quality and too often handle newspapers much as they would canned tomatoes or hot dogs.

The greatest difficulty with circulation managers, however, is their persistent demands for early editions to allow them to make earlier trains or to have more time for suburban distribution or street sales. This of course means earlier news deadlines, and this in turn means that reporters and editors have less time to gather the news and to prepare it carefully for publication. It means less accurate news in less complete editions.

Potentially our greatest threat to freedom of the press resides in the governments charged with the responsibility of enforcing all the terms of the Constitution. There has never been an American government, Republican or Democratic, federal or state, that was entirely satisfied with the reporting of its activities in the newspapers. And this is as it should be. Administrations are always colored by partisanship and often dominated by demagogues, while newspapers represent all shades of public opinion. Politicians are interested in favorable propaganda; newspapers are interested in factual news-reporting. Elected officials want slanted news and laudatory editorials, while newspapers, even the most partisan, give the opposition a showing in their news columns. Reporters and editors strive to keep the people informed on what is happening, and the electoral land-slides that sweep governments out of office and bring in new administrations demonstrate the effectiveness of their work.

Governments, almost without exception, seek a "good press." Presidents and governors attempt to put their view of things before the people through the newspapers. So do senators, rep-

representatives, and members of legislatures. Government departments flood reporters with colored handouts. Attempts are made to control the stream of news from official sources to the press. How this is done in Washington was discussed in Chapter IX. Similar conditions exist in state capitals and sometimes in municipal governments. Few politicians are anxious for the full facts to get to the public. All give lip service to the Constitution and its guarantees, but few indeed relish news and editorials that hurt their interests.

Rebuffed or slighted, criticized or exposed, politicians from the President down turn their wrath on reporters, editors, publishers, and the press. So far no federal administration has dared lay harsh hands on the first amendment to the Constitution; but there are more ways than one of skinning a cat. A reporter and his newspaper can be hurt by shutting him from the news while giving it to his rivals. Both can also be hurt by repudiating or denying the news they print even when it is correct; and this is often done. Sometimes the accurate reporting of a story results in a change of method, of wording, of strategy, just to discredit the reporter. The press as a whole can be hurt if the radio is favored for important announcements. Shady politicians feel kindly towards the radio; it does not talk back at them nor ask embarrassing questions.

The favorite and most common method, popular always with demagogues, is general denunciation of the press. Constant charges of inaccuracy and unfairness register with the unthinking public and serve to destroy the prestige of the press. The New Dealers, especially Secretary Harold L. Ickes, were from the start particularly adept at such attacks. President Roosevelt, himself, did his share of it. When they could not win the press to their policies they tried to discredit it. The efforts of painstaking and honest reporters were met with abuse. The loss of confidence in the press in the past twenty-five years, during a time when it was doing an excellent job, can be attributed

largely to such unfair attacks. The free press, however, has seen administrations come and go in Washington, and will live to see many more. It will still be carrying on when most of the official pomposities of today are forgotten.

While no attempts have been made openly in the United States to censor the news or to qualify the right of the press to print the facts as it finds them, many attempts have been made to hit the newspapers through the business office. The rising tide of general taxes and the new levies for unemployment, pensions, and other forms of social security have worked hardship on many newspapers; but that is not enough for those who would vitiate the Constitution. There is scarcely a session of the Congress or of the legislatures of the larger states that does not get several bills to control or prohibit or limit or censor various sorts of advertising; to change the rates for newspapers in the mails; to investigate newsprint and pulpwood production and to reconsider the tariff schedules; to control or punish the divulging of confidential information; to regulate truck deliveries on public roads; to switch legal advertising to court journals; or to change policies on state printing. There is no space here to detail them. The most notorious of them all was Senator Huey Long's tax on newspaper advertising.

The dictator of Louisiana faced attacks by the press at almost every turn. The press outside of Louisiana did not take him very seriously, but the press of his native state could not pass him over so easily. It fought him and his works from the start. He could not do much about the former except to denounce it roundly, but with the latter it was different. He controlled the Louisiana Legislature and its Governor. Admitting frankly that he was motivated by spite, he had a law enacted placing a tax of 2 per cent on advertising in all newspapers in Louisiana with a circulation of more than twenty thousand. "Hit 'em in the pocketbook," he ordered. He had regimented his state and had hopes of doing the same for the nation. Like all dictators he

wanted a servile press. He sought to tax his press critics into submission.

The Louisiana newspapers carried the fight to the Supreme Court of the United States, which in a unanimous decision found the law unconstitutional. Justice Sutherland, who wrote the decision, pointed out that while newspapers are not immune from ordinary taxes for the support of government, legislators must not use taxes for the control or suppression of organs of opinion.

"Since informed public opinion," he said, "is the most potent of all restraints upon misgovernment, the suppression or abridgment of the publicity afforded by a free press cannot be regarded otherwise than with grave concern."

"A free press," he added, "stands as one of the great interpreters between the government and the people. To allow it to be fettered is to fetter ourselves."

The final result of Senator Long's efforts was a new and wider definition of freedom of the press.

The Supreme Court later upheld the validity of an Arizona law imposing a license fee and a privilege tax on the publication of newspapers; this it did without comment, merely affirming the action of lower courts which held that freedom of the press was not involved. The American Newspaper Publishers' Association had argued that "the power to license the press is the power to regulate or destroy it." The law provided for a one-dollar license and a tax of 1 per cent upon gross income. These levies were not burdensome, their proponents contended, and the courts upheld their view—although the principle does look dangerous.

Reporters, editors, and publishers frequently are cited for contempt by courts, grand juries, and legislative bodies for refusal to divulge the sources of confidential information. Journalists have served terms in prison for insisting on the right to protect their informants. Some of these contempt actions are

sincere efforts to arrive at facts in the public interest; others are motivated by malice. Most of them have their origin in the exposure of grafting politicians. On appeal journalists often win, for the higher courts, viewing the case with more judicial calm, feel that it is better to err in favor of unrestricted freedom of the press than in the other direction. All worthy newspapermen recognize the necessity of protecting their informants; otherwise they would get little confidential information. Some state legislatures have now admitted the confidential relationship between journalist and informant, and have enacted laws giving it much the same status as that between lawyer and client.

Public and private groups organized to promote special interests or to exploit special viewpoints use what influence they have to color the press in their own favor. And often what they consider a "good press" is a press that covers their activities and reflects their views and belittles or ignores their opponents. Many of them are not satisfied merely with a fair presentation of their own stand; they object strenuously when their opponents receive equally fair treatment. These people want a free press for themselves, but not for those who cannot accept their viewpoint. They are the ones who want the right of free assembly for themselves but try to break up the assemblies of their ideological foes.

Such organizations flood editors with protests. They denounce individual newspapers at their gatherings. They resort to boycotts of newspapers, both circulation and advertising. Often these are the people who shout the loudest about American traditions of freedom, yet they use what force they can command in attempts to smash any newspaper that dares express a view contrary to their own or even tries to be fair to their opponents. If such people ever controlled the government of the United States we would soon bid farewell to freedom of the press. They do not understand the basic principles on which

our liberties are built; they understand only force. As these people are invariably minorities they are fortunate that the American people as a whole and its press are more tolerant than they are and grant them rights that they would, if they could, deny to others.

But we must not take our freedom of the press for granted. There has never been a time in American history when there has not been widespread adverse criticism of the newspapers; and there has never been a time that much of it was not warranted. Up to the present there has been no open, frontal attack on the press, and the minor attacks have been repulsed. There is, however, more to defending the freedom of the press than the defeating of encroachments on its prerogatives. The newspapers of the nation must serve the purpose for which their freedom was guaranteed, before they can feel assured that that guarantee will be continued in the future. Other peoples have lost their free press; we can too.

Nothing can end the freedom of our press faster than the growth of a plutocracy of publishers that gives space and expression only to reactionary viewpoints. A class press is a tyranny in itself. Rigid resistance to every movement for the improvement of the working people, who constitute a majority of the Republic, can bring a quick change of sentiment in the United States. A refusal to lead the progressive movements of the day, irresponsible treatment of the news, and intolerance of the views of others in editorial comment can also do it. American newspapers must move onward with the American people if they are to command respect. They can be assured of a rôle in our American democracy only if they are capable of acting it worthily.

Meanwhile a free and responsible press remains our greatest assurance against dictatorship and the loss of our American liberties. As Arthur Hays Sulzberger, publisher of *The New York Times*, aptly put it:

I believe that an unbiased newspaper is essential to our democratic system; that if it fails the order itself will pass. I believe, therefore, that it must be protected from bias both from within and from without, and the publisher no less than those who write the news must share this responsibility. I believe that with accurate news available to it the community can absorb its many shocks because it attains a broader understanding and a greater strength. . . .

XXI. How We Get That Way

MOST metropolitan newspapers have an editor with an impressive title and a gracious manner whose principal duty it is to say "no" politely but firmly to hopeful young men and women seeking positions on the staff. They come in a steady flow from the high schools, the colleges, the schools of journalism. They come from the country newspapers, often including a round of the city rooms as part of their vacation in the big city. They come full of ambition, but few have any real understanding of the requirements and demands of metropolitan journalism. Many have the idea that it is the most glamorous and interesting of all occupations. Some have a burning passion to reform the world. Others just know they can write. The crop is abundant; but the jobs are few. It has never been easy to get on the staff of a New York newspaper; it is more difficult than ever now that the number of newspapers has been cut in two and that some of those remaining are none too certain of their own future.

Yet newspapers must keep replenishing their staffs. There were 398 morning, 1,538 evening, and 523 Sunday newspapers printed in English in the United States in January, 1939, according to *Editor and Publisher*, which estimates that 30,000 men and women were employed on their editorial staffs. Normal obsolescence and mortality would thus provide about 2,000 vacancies annually, while probably as many more would be made available by the newspapermen and women who seek greener pastures in the movies, the radio, publicity, literature,

and whatnot. The weekly press, the foreign language press, and the news services and press syndicates employ thousands more. Editors are forever on the lookout for exceptional journalistic ability. Where do they get it?

As was evident from preceding chapters, newspaper work is always technical and often highly specialized. It is mastered only after years of hard work. Even with the best of education and mental equipment the beginner has little to offer. On metropolitan newspapers he faces a long apprenticeship of drudgery and petty assignments. He can scarcely expect promotion into one of the more responsible positions short of ten years' experience. Editors cannot take a chance on the untried man or woman. One mistake can mean a \$500,000 libel suit. Errors in editorial judgment can be equally costly in prestige—and circulation. A succession of stupidities can ruin the best of newspapers. As a result promotions are only made from among the thoroughly trained and competent men and women on the staff, or from among those who have done comparable work on other newspapers. Standards vary, but the beginner must recognize that he must acquire competence in some phase of journalism before he can get anywhere. How best to get that competence is his greatest problem.

Thirty years or so ago, while the emphasis was still on police and other local news, a college education was not considered necessary for journalism. In fact it was frowned on by many editors, much as the training of the schools of journalism is still frowned on by some editors today. A great Canadian editor of that time was asked what he thought of the advantages of a college education in newspaper work. He thought for a while, and then replied:

"Well, I ask a man who has not been to college for certain information. He replies: 'I don't know.' I ask a man who has been to college for the same information. He replies: 'I forget.'"

The wide development of news coverage and the new in-

terest in world affairs since the World War have changed this. The man or woman who attempts to enter journalism these days should most certainly provide himself or herself with a college education, and that education should include extensive study of history, especially of the state and nation, of the functioning of governments, and of the vital economic, sociological, and political movements of the day. A thorough grasp of English and the principles of composition are imperative, and the ability to speak one or more foreign languages is helpful.

Given such an educational background, there are three ways in which one may make a start in journalism:

1. Attend a school of journalism, preferably one with a faculty including practical journalists, with the expectation of obtaining there the training, the technical knowledge, and the professional ideals that will ease the way to a news staff and speed promotion once on it.

2. Get on the editorial staff of one of the metropolitan newspapers in a minor position, perhaps as an office boy or a cub reporter, and there learn what may be possible by observation and work and background reading.

3. Get employment on a small-town newspaper or a country weekly and learn all that it has to teach. While the standards on some are low and the work slipshod, there are many others that are carefully written and edited and do a splendid job of covering their communities.

We shall consider the merits of each of these separately and draw what inferences may be warranted.

Schools of journalism have been under attack both from editors and educators ever since the idea of such a school was first put forth in 1869 by General Robert E. Lee, then president of Washington, now Washington and Lee, University. Scorn and ridicule greeted General Lee's proposal in newspaper offices. Typical of the comment was that of Henry Watterson, editor of the *Louisville Courier-Journal*: "There is but one school of

journalism and that is the well-conducted newspaper office." Whitelaw Reid, editor of the New York *Tribune*, was the one contemporary editor to espouse the idea. In a lecture in 1872 he outlined eight fundamental courses that might be taught in such professional schools. Efforts at courses in instruction in Washington and Cornell Universities quickly ended in failure. The ideal persisted, however, and attempts to bring it to realization were made at the University of Pennsylvania in 1893, and at about the same time at the University of Missouri, where it remained in the catalogue for many years without actual instruction or students. The honor of opening the first school of journalism finally went to the University of Missouri; it started classes on September 14, 1908, with Walter Williams as dean.

Joseph Pulitzer decided as early as 1892 to devote some of his millions to endowing a school of journalism in an effort to elevate professional standards. He was rebuffed by Columbia University under the presidency of Seth Low and by Harvard University under the presidency of Charles W. Eliot. He finally won over to the cause Nicholas Murray Butler, new president of Columbia, and after considerable controversy the school that bears the great publisher's name was opened on September 13, 1913, with Talcott Williams as dean.

Today there are forty-three members of the American Association of Schools and Departments of Journalism, and several hundred colleges, preparatory schools, and high schools give instruction in journalism.

But the school of journalism has not yet silenced the last of its critics. They are still to be found in many newspaper offices and some of them are highly placed. They are invariably men who earned their success the hard way and feel that they are the better for it. Many of them have got along without the benefit of a college education, some with little formal education of any kind. They insist that the only way to learn journalism is by doing it. That they still have educators to support their

viewpoint is evidenced by an address before the Inland Daily Press Association by Robert M. Hutchins, President of the University of Chicago and educational reformer extraordinary. Mr. Hutchins in part said:

"The shadiest educational ventures under respectable auspices are the schools of journalism. They exist in defiance of the obvious fact that the best preparation for journalism is a good education. Journalism itself can be learned, if at all, only by being a journalist."

Obviously these gentlemen have little understanding of the ideals behind the school of journalism, and less understanding of what it is trying to do. A "good education" is a very vague thing. It may mean much or nothing. What might be a "good education" for one profession might well be almost worthless for another. A good education for a surgeon should certainly include a study of anatomy. A good education for a clergyman should certainly include theology. A good education for the journalist should certainly include newspaper technique. There was a time, and not so long ago, when the prospective lawyer learned the theory and practice of law in a law office and when the prospective physician learned his profession by reading with a physician, messing among the drugs in his office and riding the countryside with him on his sick calls. Those days are gone, and the time is also passing when the journalist can make good without years of special study and preparation.

All the pioneer founders of schools of journalism stressed the need for higher ethical standards as well as better and more appropriate educational equipment. No one familiar with American journalism will deny that this need is real, nor will anyone familiar with schools of journalism deny that they are making a valuable contribution towards professional ethical standards. The principles of objective reporting, of fairness of presentation, of public responsibility, are vital to journalism and important to the community. Low ethical standards in journalism would probably do more harm to our democracy than low

medical or legal professional standards. It is all right to say that the newspapers merely reflect life as it is. They do that and a lot more. The upright journalist is at once the leader and the servant of the Republic.

Mr. Pulitzer made this point clear when in defense of his school he wrote:

"In all my planning the chief end I had in view was the welfare of the republic. It will be the object of the college to make better journalists, who will make better newspapers, which will better serve the public."

The best schools of journalism combine the ideal and the practical. They include in their faculties authorities on theory and practical journalists. Their graduates have a sound grounding in the courses advocated by Mr. Reid: the history of the United States; the history of the world; the fundamental principles of common, constitutional, and international law; modern languages with emphasis on English; logic; political economy, and the principles of criticism. They also receive practical courses in reporting; copyreading; feature writing; typography and make-up; the history of journalism; libel law and other phases of law affecting the press; ethics of journalism; business management; problems of editorial policy; and principles of advertising.

Moreover some schools actually produce school newspapers, others maintain practical working conditions that simulate real newspaper work. They give their students reporting assignments. They operate news copy desks. The news story is written and edited. Headlines are written. Pages are laid out on dummies, and then are made up with the type in place. Press deadlines are observed. Most sides of newspaper work from editorial writing to dramatic criticism are covered. High standards are maintained. Sometimes the student's work is put beside that of the professional worker in the city's press, and one contrasted with the other. There is ample time to analyze the work done and to suggest improvement.

The graduate of a well-conducted school of journalism has a sound foundation on which to build his career. Yet no one would contend that he is a finished journalist. Like the budding physician, he, too, must serve his internship. He must learn to apply the theories and principles he was taught. He must learn to diagnose the news problem. He must acquire facility in a highly technical field. Beginning with a few halting steps, he must first learn to walk and then to run. Newspapers demand speed and then more speed. He has definite advantages over the ordinary college graduate; and these should quickly show in his work and in the progress he makes in his chosen profession.

There is still another criticism of schools of journalism: that many of their graduates end up in publicity work, song writing, the movies, almost anywhere except on the staffs of newspapers. This is often true; but it is the fault of the press and not of the school. The journalistic field has always been limited, and with the uncertainties of the past ten years it has become increasingly so. There are about twelve thousand students in schools of journalism of one kind or another, according to *Editor and Publisher*. Obviously thousands of them cannot be placed on newspapers at graduation. The best they can do is enter some allied occupation. The remedy would seem to be to raise the entrance standards and limit the number of students. The Pulitzer School of Journalism at Columbia has done just that. It requires a college degree for admittance and accepts about sixty of the hundreds of prospective students. It ranks as a graduate school.

Schools of journalism are still too young to be judged by the success of their graduates. Hundreds of their alumni are making good, however, on the staffs of the newspapers of the nation. Take the Pulitzer School as an example. Among its graduates in New York are: Lester Markel, Sunday editor of *The New York Times*; Robert E. Garst, night city editor of *The Times*; Theodore M. Bernstein, foreign news editor of

The Times; A. D. Rothman, chief American correspondent of the Australian Press Association; George Sokolsky, columnist and author; B. O. McAnney, city editor of the *World-Telegram*; H. R. Knickerbocker, foreign correspondent; and Carl W. Ackerman, who, before becoming the dean of the school, distinguished himself as a foreign correspondent.

The man or woman who begins a journalistic career on a metropolitan newspaper without any previous training has a slow and tedious program to face, unless he or she brings unusual talent to the task. The beginner becomes a small part of a large and efficient staff, probably as an office boy, a cub reporter, or a minor assistant in some department. The work assigned is mostly trivial and dull; the carrying of messages, "legwork" for a star reporter, the compilation of lists for an editor, etc. Should he or she be so fortunate as to get a job as a cub reporter there is little opportunity for writing and what is written does not often appear in the newspaper.

There are three reasons for this. First, the metropolitan newspaper has more competent reporters than it has good news assignments. The city editor naturally gives the capable men the important work to do, and always has several available for emergencies. Many of the major assignments call for expert or special information or treatment. Second, the responsible editors of the larger newspapers have no time to instruct beginners. They always have a flood of work to deal with, even when done well in the first instance, and have not the surplus energy and patience to guide incompetents. Third, the rush for early editions, earlier now than ever before, places a premium on fast, accurate, and passable copy. Naturally editors give the work to the men and women who will deliver it in ample time for the edition and in a condition that does not require rewriting.

This does not mean that many beginners do not make good on metropolitan newspapers. Only a fool would attempt to place bounds on the ambition, the energy, and the future of our American youth. While many fret and wilt at the back

desks of the city room for several years before fading from the picture, others go after what assignments they get with such vim and enthusiasm that they command attention and better assignments. Still others have such a natural gift that they cannot be denied. Some of the ablest reporters and editors in New York started as office boys. Meyer Berger and James Dawson of *The New York Times* are two examples. The New York *Daily News* prides itself on the fact that it recruits its editors and reporters from among its office boys, many of them college graduates and trained in its own "school of journalism." The fact remains, however, that New York newspapers are mostly written and edited by men and women from the "sticks"—by men and women who got their training on the smaller city and country newspapers.

The small newspaper, daily or weekly, is without doubt the best place to gather journalistic experience. New York editors almost invariably so advise beginners who consult them. There the beginner gets interesting assignments from the first. There he has a chance to show what he can do, to write to his heart's content, and to experiment as he will. Moreover he gets a variety of assignments, police, political, social, sports, financial. After finishing work on a "society murder" he may well be asked to do an editorial on traffic, to help the city editor speed the copy to the composing room, or even to help send the edition to press. There he will get a complete picture of newspaper work and a basic understanding of newspaper production. The newspaper will probably be small enough for him to know its entire personnel from the publisher to the "wrappers" in the mail room. He can discuss the problems of each department with the men doing the work, and so round out his journalistic education.

The looser supervision on the smaller newspapers is a distinct advantage for the beginner. Instead of being instructed to the last detail, he is allowed to a great extent to do his own think-

ing. He thus develops decision. It teaches him to meet emergencies as they arise. It makes him self-reliant.

Thus it would seem that the best education for journalism would be something like this: go first to college and concentrate there on the courses in economics, history, the other social sciences, government, and modern languages, with emphasis on English composition. On graduation go to a school of journalism. Then serve an internship of two or three years on a small-town newspaper. Finally graduate into "big-time" journalism.

This prescription is not guaranteed to bring success, for success will still depend on the native intelligence and industry that are brought to the task. It should, however, provide the proper tools with which to work. How those tools are used will remain with the individual. They may accompany him to the top of his profession or they may merely accompany him to the nearest tavern.

Education should not cease once one is launched into metropolitan journalism; on the contrary it should only be beginning. Anyone who expects to get anywhere in newspaper work must be prepared to spend a lifetime of study, gathering information from individuals, from situations, from newspapers, and from books. The journalist must know the world he lives in. He must know the background of every situation with which he must deal. Ultimately he will probably specialize in some phase of the news, and that specialty he must know thoroughly. He must know the men and women who make his news. He must know the motivating influences in each situation and he must be able to place every development and event in its proper environment and give it its proper significance. He must deal with information every day he works, and he must deal with that information intelligently. He must understand it so well that he can make it clear to his readers. He must be lucid when others are obscure; he must be simple when others are involved.

Superficiality is the greatest threat to modern journalism.

Too many newspapers are like Lake Eyre in Australia, thousands of square miles on the surface and inches deep. Too many newspapermen are like the youth with the automobile, in a tremendous hurry to get nowhere with nothing to do when he gets there. Too many reporters flit from assignment to assignment without drawing sustenance from any, too many editors from subject to subject. True, they are not the professional leaders and they find themselves taking orders from the men and women who know what it is all about. This is a fast-moving world; the real journalist keeps pace with it.

Every good newspaper must have reporters and editors capable of dealing with any situation or subject that may arise in the news. Take for instance the conquest of Ethiopia. When it was first mooted in dispatches from Geneva and Rome, few American newspapermen had more than the vaguest idea of Haile Selassie and his works. But when the Italian campaign began they were ready, for in the meantime there had been much study of histories, geographies, maps, and news dispatches from the scene, by the men who would handle the news. One of the great difficulties was to get adequate maps. They had to be obtained from Rome. Take also the unearthing of the tomb of Tut-ankh-Amen. At the discovery its significance was realized by only two or three American editors. The display they gave the story awoke the others. Soon the name of this hitherto unknown pharaoh was a household word and the findings in his tomb had set a new vogue that affected many phases of American life. There had been a sudden interest in the study of Egyptology. And so it goes.

A legend of bohemianism in journalism persists. Many otherwise intelligent and well-informed citizens think that newspapermen are interested only in the convivial life and that their friends and associates are mostly criminals, professional gamblers, crooked politicians, and dissolute women. This conception of journalism has been spread far by Hollywood motion pictures, which are about as inaccurate on this as on most sub-

jects. One would think that even a casual reading of newspapers would dispel this idea. But perhaps these people don't know cause and effect. Journalism has, of course, its bohemian fringe, but the men and women who hang about bars are not the ones that guide and produce newspapers. The percentage of serious workers in journalism compares favorably with that of any other American profession or industry. Certainly it is higher than that of Hollywood. Some editors and reporters after a hard, nerve-racking day take a highball or two with a colleague while they discuss their work. Many do not.

Newspapermen do like to foregather in the office, in taverns, in clubs, or elsewhere where they can talk. And when they do they invariably "talk shop." And the conversation is interesting, probably as interesting as the famous conversations of Dr. Samuel Johnson and his friends in the London coffeehouses. Reporters like to tell of their experiences, and often the story behind the story is more interesting than the printed story that the public reads. The foreign correspondent back from Moscow, Shanghai, Barcelona, Buenos Aires, Little America, Addis Ababa, or Timbuctoo; the Washington correspondent back from accompanying the President on a political tour; the city reporter covering the exposure of municipal grafters; the drama critic who has reviewed every important play on Broadway; the labor reporter fresh from the scene of the latest strike; the reporter back from investigating the condition of the share croppers of the South; the Wall Street reporter; will discuss the things they saw and did and the personalities they met with a frankness and a wealth of detail and color that is not possible in the news columns. Their colleagues want the "low-down"; and they get it. The conversation will sweep over many phases of modern life; and the discussion will usually be intelligent and informative.

Newspapermen like to associate with one another, for they find most other persons shallow, narrow, and uninformed. Few individuals have their opportunity for observation of life. Jour-

nalists have little patience with the "tired businessman" who knows his own business and the conditions immediately affecting it and little else, and whose idea of entertainment is a night-club floor show seen through the haze of the sixth high-ball and heard through the harsh discords of noisemakers. A few columnists and their back-scratching friends do patronize the night clubs and in too many instances pay for their fill with notices in their newspapers. They can be counted on one's fingers; the vast majority of newspapermen cannot afford such entertainment and do not accept such favors. Generally they are not even interested.

Despite all rumors to the contrary the average newspaperman leads a regular and sane life, plays bridge and golf, reads many books and periodicals, grows flowers or raises dogs, brings up a decent family in the fear of the Lord, and sleeps eight hours a day. This has always been true of the news editor and the reporter on regular assignment. General reporters, those sent hither and yon on assignments, have less control of their time. The old days when the general reporter rarely got home to his family and was not recognized by his children when he did are gone forever. These conditions were true only of the pioneer days when the newspapers were poor and the staffs inadequate. Today the five-day, forty-hour week is general throughout metropolitan journalism, and newspapermen and women have ample time for home life.

There are exceptions, of course. There always will be cases when a combination of unusual out-of-town assignments will keep a reporter on the go for weeks or months. A recent experience on *The New York Times* illustrates this. The city editor received a telephone call from Mrs. Raymond Daniell, the wife of one of his star reporters, now chief correspondent in London.

"Can you tell me where I can locate my husband?" she inquired.

"He is somewhere in Louisiana or Arkansas, but exactly

where I don't know," the city editor replied. "If it is important I will try to reach him for you."

"Oh, it's not so very important," she responded. "I merely wanted to inform him that he has another son."

Working conditions and salaries in journalism have improved steadily over the past half-century. But there is still room for large improvement on most newspapers. In no other business or profession is so much expected in intelligence, knowledge, training, judgment, loyalty, and enthusiasm for so little monetary return. Too often the idealistic newspaperman works himself to the point of physical collapse and nervous exhaustion without any evidence of corresponding idealism on the part of his paymaster. Too often he is left to get his reward in honor and glamour. Too often he investigates and exposes conditions that have their counterpart in his own office. Too often the business managers, the treasurers, the advertising solicitors, and others close to the moneybags take the cash and leave the credit to the news editors and reporters. The monetary compensation in journalism has never been adequate and probably never will be so long as newspapers are sold for one-third of their cost of production and the balance—and the profit—made from the advertising columns. Journalists have never distinguished themselves as bargainers. Some even consider it beneath their dignity to mention salaries to their publishers. Overpaid newspapermen are as scarce as giant pandas, and like them should be placed on public exhibition.

American journalists have been singularly inept in their efforts at professional organization. English and Australian journalists have been much more capable, or fortunate. Up to 1933 no organization of journalists had made headway on a national scale in the United States; and none had done much to better the lot of the American newspaperman. Since then two have come to the front: the American Newspaper Guild, which first affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and later with the Congress of Industrial Organizations, and, frankly a labor

union, concerns itself with hours and pay, accepts office boys, printer's devils, and bookkeepers as members, calls strikes, conducts advertising boycotts, and damns publishers from Hell to breakfast; and the American Press Society, which is attempting to elevate American journalists on professional lines and is more concerned with principles and ethical practice than with minimum wages, although it, too, strives to better working conditions and salaries. An American journalist can belong to both without a compromise of principles, although few do. The Guild is leftist; the APS rightist.

There is doubtless room for both organizations in American journalism, just as the Union and the Institute, operating on similar lines, have each had a large measure of success in English journalism. Neither of the American groups, however, has made the progress that might be expected of it. The Guild, the larger, represents only a minority of working American newspapermen and women. It had a membership of about 6,000 in 1937 when it confined its activities to the editorial departments but admitted office boys and clerks; since then, it has taken in the business office and it has enlarged its membership to about 18,500. No membership figures are available for the APS. American newspapermen seem to have an innate aversion to joining professional or craft organizations. Each wants to go his own way. Yet no one familiar with American journalism will deny that collective bargaining is the best hope of improving working conditions and raising wages on many newspapers or that an effective code of professional ethics is one of the crying needs in most newspaper offices. Low wages and low ethical standards still exist in many offices and in some cities, where, competition being what it is, the worst becomes the model for the best.

The Guild has made itself felt in almost all newspaper offices in the United States. In some instances it has wrung higher wages and tolerable conditions of work from unwilling publishers; in others it has done more harm than good. Some of its

national officers and some of its local and newspaper officers have been more concerned with promoting the class struggle than the welfare of newspapermen. Its affiliation with the CIO and its endorsement of leftist policies have antagonized many sincere journalists who consider themselves professional workers and do not want guidance or assistance from coal miners, truck drivers, and longshoremen. Its communistic tactics have alienated many whom it should have as members and have harried and worried news editors and publishers previously inclined to be co-operative and sympathetic. Its insistence on a Guild shop, which would give it a monopoly of news coverage, has frightened many a conscientious publisher anxious to preserve the freedom of the press and maintain objective presentation of the news. It has sown strife and bitterness and has impaired the morale of many capable newspaper staffs.

The Guild has made its major appeal to the lower-flight journalists and the hangers-on in journalism. To these it has offered the false hope of wages that their ability cannot command and of security that their competence does not merit. It has made them dissatisfied and bitter. The incompetents in every office have joined it and become in many cases its most ardent workers. This is especially true since the passage of the Wagner Labor Relations Law, for now as officers and organizers of a labor union they feel inviolate under the law and in fact have a security that they hitherto did not know. Discharged, they can hail the editor and the publisher before the National Labor Relations Board on charges. In fairness it should be added that many capable journalists have also joined the Guild and endorsed its policies, but the majority of them have not, and those that did are not directing its activities. Most of the men and women who make American journalism what it is are still outside its ranks and generally critical of its methods. The Guild as constituted at present is an attempted dictatorship of the incompetent.

But the Guild is young and its mistakes are mostly the mis-

takes of youth. It has in its ranks many sincere workers for genuine social progress along American principles. They, too, are inexperienced in labor organization and negotiation. The radicals and the malcontents, the men and women with bitterness in their soul and discontent in their hearts, have done most of the work for the Guild and have done most of the directing of its policies. They have espoused belligerency instead of conviction. They have offered hatred instead of co-operation. They have in some cases even gone to the extreme of trying to destroy newspapers on which scores of newspapermen and women must depend for a livelihood.

Wisdom, however, comes with maturity. The Guild will probably be here a long time. There is a great work to be done, and it and the American Press Society, the only other instrument available, should do it. Other professional and craft organizations have sown their wild oats and gone on to live a life of great usefulness. The Guild will doubtless do so also. It has done nothing that is irreparable; there is much that it can do that will help newspapermen and the newspapers that give them a medium of expression. Social progress still has a long way to travel in the United States and enlightened journalists will not be behind the procession.

What does the future offer to American journalists? What are the prospects for the young men and women entering journalism today? How does the future compare with the past and the present? There is less opportunity for mediocrity today than there was a quarter of a century ago. There are fewer newspapers in the metropolitan centers. There is, however, a constant demand for outstanding talent, an insatiable demand. Newspapers have seen a vast expansion in news interest since 1914 and they need men and women capable of dealing with it. Publications are one of the great industries of the country. The reading public and newspaper circulations are greater than ever before, and they will go on expanding. The public appreciates and demands objective reporting more than ever. The suppres-

sion or the censorship of the written word over a large part of the world has made us more conscious of our heritage of free expression. So long as we have our basic freedoms we shall have a virile press, and we shall need reporters and editors to produce and direct it.

The professional hazards of journalism are no worse than those of many other overcrowded professions. The investment in time and tuition fees is less than for most. Then it has many allied fields in which the journalist may graze. The movies, the radio, television, the magazines, the theater, literature, and publicity all need able writers and editors. Newspaper work, the experience in writing and the observation of life that it offers, is the best preparation for them. The well-trained newspapermen and women of the future are certain of an important rôle in the American drama. They can count on a decent standard of living. And they will undoubtedly find joy in a job well done.

XXII. A Glimpse into the Future

THE NEWSPAPER of today is the result of five thousand years of human effort to disseminate current information in writing. It is the modern miracle that has made all other miracles in expression and transmission its own. But have we reached the ultimate? What of the newspaper of tomorrow?

Only a fool would attempt prophecy, for the newspapermen who have seen the progress of the past thirty, forty, or fifty years and marveled at it would not attempt to foretell what the next thirty, forty, or fifty years will bring. No, not even what next year will bring. There is only one thing certain of the newspaper of the future and that is that it will move onward, availing itself of every improvement in communications and every advance in mechanical progress and dealing with every phase of our complex civilization. Yet there are certain trends evident in our journalism today that make problems that must find their solution in the future; and the solution of these problems must inevitably affect forms and methods.

First of all there are trends observable in the treatment of the news itself that must change our American newspapers. The tendency is more and more towards specialization in news.

Already we have national newspapers of wide circulation that cover national and international news in great detail and at huge expense, and newspapers that place their emphasis on local and community news. Indications are that this tendency will continue and that finally most intelligent readers will sub-

scribe to at least two newspapers, one to provide world news and the other neighborhood news.

The near future will doubtless see these national newspapers edited in central offices, probably in New York or Chicago, and printed simultaneously in strategically located plants, probably in New York, Chicago, Denver, Seattle, San Francisco, Atlanta, and New Orleans. They would thus be able to reach readers in all parts of the United States while their news was still fresh and interesting.

The foreign and national news would pour into the central offices and there be edited, set into type, and placed in page forms. Matrices from these page forms would be used to send impressions of the page forms by some process of sound photo or facsimile to the district printing offices. There by a process of photoengraving and stereotyping metal plates would be produced for the presses. Perhaps a couple of pages would be added to carry local news and local advertising. Then the complete daily edition of the newspaper would be printed simultaneously in its many plants, and distribution would start over railroads, airway routes, and express highways.

The technical equipment for such newspapers is available right now. The one great present deterrent is the news service contract. Associated Press memberships and United Press and International News rights are for special local territories. Thus the *Daily News* with its Associated Press franchise for Chicago is not permitted to print in Kansas City and compete there directly with the *Star*. The newspaper that would gather all its own news firsthand and make its way without a news service could go right ahead with such a national project. Up to now, however, no American newspaper has dared do so.

Circumstances will ultimately force a change on the news services, or some new service will be organized for such a purpose. The community newspapers will not want to pay their proportionate share of the cost of providing a world-news service that they will not use. Unable to meet the competition

of the metropolitan newspapers on world news, the locality newspapers are already concentrating more and more on complete local coverage and community service in their own fields, thus making themselves indispensable to their readers. They cannot afford to give up their valuable space to news that they must cover inadequately. They recognize the pre-eminence of the metropolitan newspapers in their fields while safeguarding theirs in their own. The news-gathering organizations will have to realign their services accordingly, giving the national newspapers what they want, and the locality newspapers what they need, both in contracts and news.

With the cost of producing newspapers steadily rising in all departments the trend is towards smaller and more compact newspapers. Already publishers and editors have striven to make the news story shorter and more lucid. Ultimately they will have to deal in a revolutionary manner with advertising rates and advertising volume. The average American newspaper is too big and too unwieldy. Its information is scattered over too many pages. Too often news is merely wrapping for advertising. Too many newspapers look like Sears Roebuck catalogues and are about as interesting. Publishers are in a mad scramble to print a great bulk of advertising, and in turn advertise this great bulk in the trade journals as if it were something important. Profit from the advertising is what is important to the newspaper, and this paradoxically is often overlooked.

In the days when newsprint was cheap, labor costs low, and news demands less insistent, advertising was highly profitable, and a great volume of it indicated a corresponding prosperity and acceptance by advertisers. Today much of it yields little or no profit. This is especially true of department store advertising, which is sold by contract at minimum rates. Publishers have not dared raise advertising rates in proportion to increased costs, nor in many instances even in proportion to increased circulation. They want to maintain their advertising volume; and the advertisers cannot pay the higher prices they should

and maintain it. Sooner or later publishers will have to face the issue: and when they do they will double or triple advertising rates. Such an action will have important consequences for the newspapers and for their readers.

The immediate result will be a drastic reduction in advertising volume. This in turn will reduce the size of the newspapers. Individual advertising announcements will be smaller and less profusely illustrated. This will simplify the placing of them in the pages and open up more space and better positions for news stories and news pictures. It will be possible to classify news more intelligently and to dress news pages more symmetrically. The advertising will be less commanding and more of the reader's attention will go to the news. The emphasis will be where it rightfully belongs. It will mean a new advertising technique, less clamorous, more dignified. The smaller newspaper will be easier to handle and easier to read. It will tell its story better.

Not only will there be colossal savings in newsprint, there will also be great economies in photoengraving and composition, and in truckage and mailing. The newsboys will certainly bless the new day. The volume of advertising may drop to one-third or one-fourth, but it will be highly profitable. There will be less ravaging of the spruce forests of the United States and Canada.

Many students of journalism feel that the ideal would be to sell newspapers for the cost of production plus a reasonable profit and dispense with advertising entirely, as does the *Reader's Digest*. This would certainly give all publishers a sense of independence and clear many newspapers of the suspicion of serving special or sinister groups. It does not seem possible, however, now or at any time in the near future, for it would triple the cost to the readers. Millions of Americans then could not afford to buy a daily newspaper. It would work a hardship on millions more, and few persons could buy more than one newspaper daily. This would be a national calamity, for the cheap circulation of news is vital in the efficient conduct of our

democratic government and in the efficient management of our business. Moreover advertising is news of a sort inasmuch as it conveys valuable information to readers. If you doubt it go to the nearest public library with old newspaper files and take a look at the newspapers of fifty or one hundred years ago. You will discover that the advertisements in these newspapers are fully as interesting to you as are the news stories, for they help to complete the picture of the civilization of the time. Abolition of advertisements in newspapers would be a great hardship to American business as at present organized and to the buying public.

Smaller and more costly newspapers will further accentuate the trend towards shorter, simpler, and more lucid treatment of the news. For some years now the policy in most newspaper offices has been to cut run-of-the-mill stories "to the bone" and to display important stories. Excepting on rare occasions no more space is given to a story than just enough to give the newspaper's readers the information the editors feel they should have. The old lead that told the story that was told again in the columns of type following it has disappeared. The story that twenty years ago took 1,500 words is done now in 1,000, or perhaps 500. Editors have no space for the trivial story, or for trivial details. The prospects are that news coverage will continue to expand as our national and domestic interests continue to widen and our civilization becomes more complex. The prospects also are that the cost of gathering, editing, and printing news will continue to grow, making news and space still more valuable. This will bring further pressure on reporters and editors to hold down the individual story and impose more exacting news standards. Why use 200 columns of type to give the news when it can be done in 120?

The increasing demands for news space and the increasing speed of modern life will also work a reformation in headlines and news display. This is already evident and will grow apace. The elaborate and decorative headline is definitely a thing of

the past. Editors long felt that they were writing headlines for readers who did not have time to read the story; now they are finding that readers have no time to read even the headlines. The average reader, they have discovered, glances at the headlines to identify its subject; if it interests him he goes directly to the story, if not he passes on to the next. Few readers go through all the long and graceful and balanced headline "banks" that look pretty—sometimes—but serve no useful purpose. Some editors have tried streamlining their headlines with some success. Others have tried the *Time* model, the mere identification of the subject. Still others have eliminated the use of many "banks." There is little doubt that the headlines of the future will conserve space and identify the subject matter of the story as quickly and as effectively as possible. Editors will still want to "dress" their pages to make them typographically attractive, but the headlines and the display will be clearer, smaller, and strictly utilitarian.

The newspaper of the future will be better printed and easier to read. The emphasis will be on projecting ideas. The newsprint will be of better quality, probably made from surplus farm products, which will take a clearer impression from the type and the pictures. The ink, too, will be of better quality and permit things not now feasible. Presses that will allow several impressions will make color printing practical for the daily newspaper, not merely the garish smudges of red, green, blue, and yellow of the comic supplements but refined, harmonious, and subtle combinations that will rival the product of the lithographers. Text and illustrations will approach, if not exceed, the effectiveness of the best magazines and make today's newspapers look crude and flat. These things seem certain, because most of the mechanical equipment is almost ready, awaiting only the refinements, adaptations, and speed to make their adoption imperative.

The presses of the future will also be faster. The great rotary presses of the present are marvels of speed and efficiency as

compared with the hand press of Benjamin Franklin, yet they will seem slow as compared with the presses of the near future. Progress in this respect is steady and will continue. Only ten years ago presses were made for a maximum speed of 36,000 newspapers an hour and an operating speed of about 27,000; today they are being made to deliver a maximum of 60,000 and an operating speed of from 45,000 to 54,000. Newsprint of greater tensile strength and press improvements in prospect will allow speeds of 100,000 and more an hour.

Such press speeds will make possible the production of editions in one-half or one-third the time now required, and this will have interesting effects on news coverage and reader interest. Most of the great newspapers today require from six to twelve hours to run off their circulations on their presses. This means early edition deadlines, and also means that early editions contain much "filler," because the news cannot be set in time. Cutting the printing time to a third would permit much later deadlines. This saving in time will give reporters an opportunity for more complete coverage of their assignments, in many instances allowing them to wait for the conclusion of the late-breaking story instead of rushing back to their offices or to telephones while the news is still unfolding. Copyreaders will have more time for careful checkup and more intelligent treatment of the news. There will also be more time for proof-reading. There will be less "railroading" of news into the edition. The information in the newspaper will be more complete and more accurate and will be fresher when it reaches the reading public.

This further speeding up will be helped along by new inventions, two of which are already in the offing. One of these is the semagraph which sets the story into type direct from the transmitting wire, making one operation of telegraph and composition. It has been tested already between the offices of the Associated Press and *The New York Times* in New York. It takes the copy of the reporter at the distant point or news

service and delivers it in type ready to go into the page forms in the composing room. It must get the copy, however, in condition for publication. The other is the facsimile, which will transmit whole pages of news copy, or of a newspaper for that matter, across the continent or across the oceans in a few seconds. When it is perfected it will prove invaluable for transmitting documents or texts or newspaper pages. Other inventions to come are only limited by the imagination and ingenuity of American scientists.

The newspaper of the future can also count on still greater speed in transportation, allowing more rapid gathering of news and pictures and faster delivery of the editions to the reading public and thus wider distribution. Transcontinental and transoceanic airplanes flying through the stratosphere, a network of express highways, and improved railroads competing with them will all play their rôle in the dissemination of information to the reader at distant points.

The page size of the newspaper will probably remain what it is, although there will doubtless be more tabloids. The tabloid is definitely here to stay. It has proved its convenience in subways and other crowded places. Its news in capsule form, its "snappy" treatment of the serious, its abundance of pictures, are attuned to the requirements of a large number of people in this fast and furious world of ours. These people, most of whom have little time and less inclination for reading, will support it. On the other hand there remain a large number of people who want fuller and more serious treatment of the news; they will look to the full-sized newspaper with the space and the temperament to give them what they want. There is a field for each now; the chances are, people remaining much as they are, that there will be a field for each in the future America.

The radio has had and is continuing to have a profound effect on the reading habits of Americans, and this will inevitably find its reflection in the newspapers. The radio gives its in-

formation to millions of people with little effort on their part. They just listen. Its news messages are brief. Often they are dramatized. It is developing a slovenly minded public to whom the reading of long dispatches and texts is boring. These people would rather hear the President's fireside talks, given with all the beguiling charm of the finished orator, than read the cold type in the newspaper. They catch some of the color of the occasion. The news editor who wants these people as readers must also make his messages brief, and present them with all the color, picturesque language, and drama that his medium will permit. He will use more illustration and less type.

The radio has taken much of the surprise element out of news. Seldom now does the reader gasp on seeing the startling headline in his newspaper. This makes for fewer special editions and for less sensational headlines. The result of the heavy-weight fight, the vote on important legislation in Congress, the victory on some distant battlefield, the assassination of the statesman, are all broadcast over the face of the earth before the edition can reach the street. Circulations, however, still rise to new peaks in the wake of important events, even of those most fully covered by the broadcasters, which seems to indicate that the radio stimulates an interest that can only be gratified by the full facts in the newspapers. The new European war proved this. The newspaper does give fuller information with greater accuracy. It has the advantage that whereas the radio is momentary, its pages can be laid aside to be read at leisure or over again and again. A vital word, a vital part of the radio story can easily be missed; not so the newspaper. But the newspaper has a real competitor in the radio, one growing steadily in its influence.

The news editors of the future will have to reckon with the fact that theirs is a twice-told tale. There will be less rushing to the street with hysterical headlines built on a bulletin or two. Editors will want to have something to tell that the radio has not already given to most of their readers. They will

naturally want complete and exact facts, told under more conservative and more revealing headlines.

But the radio is only one-third of the story, for television and facsimile are certain in the near future. Each will also have far-reaching effects on the gathering and presentation of news.

Picture the American citizen of the future sitting with his family in front of the television machine in his home. First he tunes in some event and follows it right through, move by move, to its conclusion. He can see the baseball game play by play. He can watch the prize fight blow by blow. He can follow the action of any happening that can be predicted and that lends itself to photography. He and his family are almost spectators. The radio brings them the sound effects. They see and they hear, and with little effort on their part. Then he tunes out the television and tunes in the facsimile. A page of news is presented to them, probably in bulletin form. They read about the rise or fall of stocks in Wall Street, about the action of the state legislature, about the newest development in the latest crime, about the battle in France. They have a newspaper in miniature. They have the major facts of much that happens in the world, and an eyewitness experience of some events. Later they may listen to interpretative comment over the radio.

How will the newspaper approach that family? What can it offer that the family has not already?

This will be a major crisis for news editors and publishers. Many of them will have to make drastic changes in their news presentation; for others minor adjustments will be enough. Higher intelligence in the coverage of the news and its display will be necessary by all. Greater stress will have to be placed on community service. The newspaper will have to make itself even more important than it is today. This, however, will be possible.

The newspapers and their news services, for one thing, will probably cease making their expensively-gathered information

available to the broadcasting companies and will make them gather their own. The newspapers with bigger and better staffs and greater facilities will do a more competent job. Up to the present the radio has not been overly competent in covering news firsthand. There is scarcely a day of important news that hundreds of listeners do not call newspapers by telephone in efforts to check on radio information—nearly always sensational, frequently hysterical, and almost always either wrong or misunderstood by the listener. The broadcasters will improve with experience, but they will still lack the newspaper's tradition of objectivity and fairness, of accuracy and completeness. Regulated by a federal commission, while the freedom of the press is guaranteed by the Constitution, they will not have the newspaper's tradition of independence and courage. The broadcasters will have to toady to a government bureau; the newspapers can defy the government and all its minions. The broadcasters must "watch their step," while the press is free to do its work as best it may regardless of whom it pleases or displeases.

Then the newspaper has other advantages. It has more time for its work. It rarely has to keep on top of the event: and when it does it can do a more considered job in its next edition. Its reporters can question the principals of an event both before and afterwards. They can dig up and supply ample background to bring out its significance. When warranted they can take ample space to develop it to its full news value. The newspaper can deal with two or three hundred stories in one edition, whereas broadcasters must necessarily limit their output. It can thus present much interesting and important news that the broadcasters cannot touch. It also has the space to give an abundance of intelligent interpretative comment on foreign events, on domestic developments, on the financial and business markets, on sports, on books, on amusements and music, on housing, labor, social security, and whatever issues are uppermost in the public mind. Its editorial page can lead public movements, speaking for itself as the broadcasters cannot, and

render many a public service. Finally advertising in the newspapers is less offensive than over the air.

The American family of the future that wants to keep informed about the world in which it lives must certainly have the newspaper enter its home, if only to supplement the radio, the television, and the facsimile. Editors will work in full consciousness of the needs of their readers and will provide for those needs then, just as now each editor works for his own group of readers. Their editions will be crammed with interesting and vital information for the community. There will probably be fewer newspapers, but they will be much better and more widely read.

The trend in the United States for twenty-five years has been towards fewer and better newspapers. This trend will doubtless continue. The steadily rising cost of producing newspapers indicates as much. Sixty years ago an editor, perhaps with a printer as partner, could buy a press and some type for a thousand dollars or so and start a newspaper. Now it requires millions of dollars to found or buy a newspaper in any of the larger communities. News interests are still widening as life becomes more complex; taxes and social service are growing steadily; business and journalistic ethics are becoming more insistent; wage scales are rising; there is little hope of lower production costs. All this will still further entrench the successful newspapers of today and make it more difficult to found new ones.

At present the young man entering journalism can scarcely hope to own his own newspaper. Any newspapers that are started—or bought—will be by the man who has made a fortune in making safety pins, running chain stores, building apartment houses, or owning banks. There will be one difference however. The newspaperman and woman of the future will be able to buy stock in his newspaper and thus get a small proprietary interest in the property and some say in the management. Today most newspapers are owned by individuals or

families, a throwback to the time when it was cheap and easy to start a newspaper. The tremendous rise in estate taxes is fast changing this, and more and more stock in these closely held corporations is becoming available. The wise publisher will offer this stock to his own editors and reporters and try to keep ownership within the newspaper's office, for then it will not be subject to dictatorship from without. Editors and reporters will be glad to buy up to their financial limit, for every journalist worth his salt likes to feel that his newspaper is his very own.

Regardless of what is said here, the future remains uncertain for newspapers and for journalists as for everything else. A dictatorship, of either the right or the left, could come like a blight and wipe out our free press along with our other basic liberties. Newspaper editors will resist such a calamity with all their might, knowing that full and free expression of opinion is even more important to them than it is to the other citizens of the republic. Given a free country, with political and economic freedom, the American press will walk abreast of the nation's progress, and will not be found wanting.

“Good Night”

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